

ART BECAME THE OXYGEN: AN ARTISTIC RESPONSE GUIDE



ABOVE: MIRROR SHIELDS AT STANDING ROCK

DESIGNED BY **CANNUPA HANSKA LUGER**



BY ARLENE GOLDBARD

CHIEF POLICY WONK

WITH AN ESSAY BY AMELIA BROWN

MINISTER OF EMERGENCY ARTS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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Dear Reader,

Thank you for downloading ***Art Became The Oxygen, An Artistic Response Guide***, the **U.S. Department of Arts and Culture's** latest publication. By using the USDAC's resources and taking part in its actions, you're joining thousands across the U.S. who understand that to thrive, democracy needs all our voices and all our creativity.

If you would like to take a further step toward honing and deploying your artistic response skills, please be sure you're on the USDAC mailing list to receive information about the newly developing Bureau of Artistic Response, a national network of Citizen Artists to share resources, learn from each other, and make a wider impact. Just add your name and email at our **website**.

The USDAC is a *people-powered department*—a grassroots action network inciting creativity and social imagination to shape a culture of empathy, equity, and belonging. It's through your participation that ***Art Became The Oxygen*** has been made possible. We are grateful to all of the partners whose inspiring words and creative ideas you will read in this Guide, and to each and every one of you!

Please feel free to contact us. You can always reach us at hello@usdac.us.

Together we create!

The USDAC

TOGETHER, WE CREATE.





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A ROADMAP TO ART BECAME THE OXYGEN: AN ARTISTIC RESPONSE GUIDE

We recommend reading the entire Guide. Here's a brief summary of what you'll find in each section, and how you might use the information.

PART ONE. ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS.....PAGE 4

Guidance on different definitions of emergency and types of response; plus an introductory essay by Amelia Brown, Minister of Emergency Arts on the USDAC National Cabinet.

PART TWO. CRAFTING ARTISTIC RESPONSE.....PAGE 15

Description and examples of key types of artistic response, arts-based work responding to disaster or other community-wide emergency, much but not all created in collaboration with community members directly affected. What art can do to offer care, comfort, and connection; amplify protest; and promote reframing and resilience. Examples of a range of artistic response, including story-gathering, public art, poetry and narrative, music, dance, theater, media and photography, and individual art-making.

PART THREE. BRIDGING WORLDS: ARTISTS AND AGENCIES.....PAGE 44

Guidance to official emergency management resources, emergency preparedness and relief for artists and arts organizations, evaluating artistic response, and summarizing the needs of the field for collaboration, funding, and learning opportunities.

PART FOUR. PARTNERSHIPS, ETHICS, VALUES, CARING AND SELF-CARE.....PAGE 53

Understanding the forces that create or exacerbate crisis; mobilizing the multiple skills needed for effective artistic response; the ingredients to craft good partnerships; the essential ethical commitments; and the importance of maintaining self-care even as you are offering care.

LINKS.....PAGE 67

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ABOUT THE USDAC

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE (USDAC) is a network of artists, activists, and allies inciting creativity and social imagination to shape a culture of equity, empathy, and belonging.

To create a just and welcoming world, all of us need social imagination, the capacity to envision and enact change. Yet as a society, we've failed to prioritize the programs and policies that cultivate creativity, empathy, and collaboration. Social institutions seldom allow us to show up as whole, creative humans. Too often, the stories we're asked to accept limit possibility, depicting us only as consumers and workers rather than creators and communicators.

Together, we can rewrite these stories. We affirm the right to culture and pursue cultural democracy that:

- welcomes each individual as a whole person
- values each community's heritage, contributions, and aspirations
- promotes caring, reciprocity, and open communication across all lines of difference
- dismantles all barriers to love and justice

To advance this vision, the nation's only people-powered department*:

- Engages everyone in weaving social fabric and strengthening communities through arts and culture
- Builds capacity and connective tissue among socially-engaged artists and cultural organizers
- Generates momentum and public will for creative policies and programs rooted in USDAC values
- Infuses social justice organizing with creativity and social imagination

Art and culture are powerful means of building empathy, creating a sense of belonging, and activating the social imagination and civic agency necessary to

make real change. When we feel seen, when we know that our stories and imaginations matter, we are more likely to bring our full creative selves to the work of social change. That not only makes our work more effective, we have more fun.

Our national actions invite everyone to perform a future infused with the transformative power of arts and culture. Our local organizing helps communities dream aloud and turn their dreams into reality. We connect people across regions in an ever-expanding creative learning community by sharing vital information, generating inspiring actions, and devising cultural policies and programs to catalyze a profound culture shift in the service of social and environmental justice. Together, we're creating new narratives of our power and possibility and scaling up strategies for equity and belonging.

The USDAC is not an outside agency coming in; it's our inside agency coming out! Radically inclusive and vibrantly playful, the USDAC offers pathways of engagement for any individual or organization eager to deepen a commitment to creativity and social change.

Culture shift is an all-hands-on-deck effort: whether you're already performing this work or new to creative organizing, join the people-powered department today!

THIS IS AN ACT OF COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION. ADD YOURS.

*The USDAC is not a government agency.

A man and a woman are standing in a dark, still body of water, possibly a pond. They are both wearing waders and holding a long, thin tree branch horizontally across the water. The woman on the left is wearing a white dress and has long dark hair. The man on the right is wearing a grey vest over a blue shirt and has a beard. The water is very still, creating a clear reflection of the couple and the branch they are holding. The background shows some trees and foliage reflected in the water.

PART ONE: ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

ABOVE: AN IMAGE FROM *CRY YOU ONE*
BY MONDO BIZARRO



MAKING THE MOST OF ART BECAME THE OXYGEN

PART ONE OF ART BECAME THE OXYGEN WILL FAMILIARIZE READERS WITH KEY THEMES, ISSUES, AND UNDERSTANDINGS that can make the difference between work that helps and that harms. Without understanding the underlying principles and intrinsic challenges, practical information won't mean much.

People turn to guides for practical advice and information. You'll find both here. But before you do, please know that some essential knowledge can't be passed on in the form of tips and techniques. Two people can perform the same action—say, show up to lead storytelling or play music with the residents of a temporary shelter—with markedly different understandings of what they are doing and why, and that will determine whether their offerings are received as desired, will be useful to their companions, will aid healing or hinder it.

The title of this *Guide* was taken from an interview with Carol Bebel, Co-founder and Executive Director of **Ashé Cultural Arts Center** in New Orleans. The quote below is about Ashé's experience after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, getting back into the city seven or eight weeks after the storm:

People needed something magical to help them feel better enough to face the next day. Every day was a reminder of irreversible loss. Probably most of us never had imagined what happened. People always talk about the perfect storm. There was a way in which—like death, you leave that out there as something that could happen, might happen. But when it happens to you it kind of strips you of your security blanket because you know that it's real. So we had art as a healing force: music, the opportunity for people to be together and to find creative ways in which to interact. This became the work that we did.

There are so many things that anchor our existence. To lose them all leaves us on a sea without an anchor. So people were dealing with identity issues. They were dealing with disenfranchisement issues, they were dealing with homesickness. They were dealing with loss in a huge fashion. What we really came to appreciate was the necessity to get some air in the room first before you try and do something else, to get them some oxygen so that they can start breathing. So art became the oxygen.

THIS GUIDE WAS CREATED WITH A BROAD READERSHIP IN MIND. We hope to engage three categories of reader who share the intention of offering care and compassion and helping to create possibility in the midst or wake of crisis:

- Artists who wish to use their gifts for healing, whether in the immediate aftermath of a crisis or during the months and years of healing and rebuilding resilience that follow.
- Resource-providers—both public and private grantmakers and individual donors—who care about compassion and community-building.
- Disaster agencies, first responders, and service organizations on call and on duty when an emergency occurs, and those committed to helping over time to heal the damage done.

Readers' aims may differ. Some will seek tools and guidance they can use during and after an emergency situation; others consider how best to support artists, creative organizers, and communities as they do this important work; and others will be searching for effective and ethical ways to collaborate across barriers, be they agency/artist, local/outsider, or public/private. In all cases overarching principles should be borne in mind. That is why the themes discussed in the balance of Part One are threaded throughout *Art Became The Oxygen*.

NATURAL AND CIVIL DISASTERS AND SOCIAL EMERGENCIES

In common parlance, Hurricane Katrina was a “natural disaster” (i.e., the result of a huge storm) and the days following the killing of Michael Brown in August 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri were a “civil emergency” (i.e., the result of human actions). But in lived experience, the distinction often evaporates.

In the 2009 anthology *Civic Engagement in the Wake of Katrina*, Carol Bebel authored a chapter entitled “The Vision Has Its Time: Culture and Civic Engagement in Postdisaster New Orleans.” It begins with paragraphs describing the indivisibility of natural events and human responses:

In 2005, the American phenomenon of postdisaster living was created by Hurricane Katrina. Shifting in status from category 4 to a category 5, Katrina hit the Gulf of Mexico and caused catastrophic disaster all along the Gulf Coast. In New Orleans, the hurricane was a near miss. It had been reduced in velocity to a category 4. It stalled in the gulf near the mouth of the Mississippi River, then miraculously veered east, averting the perfect formula for a maximum destructive hurricane hit to New Orleans.

We had avoided the catastrophic storm, but we were not so lucky in escaping the incompetence of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency responsible for the poorly constructed and inadequate levee system. Depending on the source referenced, five-eighths to seven-eighths of the city of New Orleans was flooded in the unprecedented occurrence of, the shutdown of, and near destruction of an American city. Adding insult to injury, the federal government then took six days—nearly a week—to organize a supposedly effective rescue response for American citizens in New Orleans trapped in a flood caused by federal negligence.

Ironically, propaganda has it that Katrina was the culprit. The clever use of the Katrina prefix on almost everything related to the disaster makes it hard for everyday folk to hold on to the fact that it was, indeed, a federal flood that accomplished the vast destruction in New Orleans. The Corps' intentional unwillingness to accept responsibility laid the foundation for the inhumane, callous, and unjust way in which New Orleans has been handled in the wake of this tragic event. Blaming the victim has become high sport, and New Orleans is the game.

Sandy Storyline is “a participatory documentary that collects and shares stories about the impact of Hurricane Sandy on our neighborhoods, our communities and

our lives.” Alongside many other stories offering the first-person human dimension of disaster, this rich archive features Mary Anne Parisi’s description of losing her home in Staten Island following Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Parisi tells a too-typical tale of relief offered with one hand and withdrawn with another. Attempting to redeem her badly damaged home leads to health problems which lead from untenable living conditions to decent housing which she is challenged to keep because her retirement income is higher than the level set for subsidized utility payments. She concludes:

Then the electric bills started coming in for outrageous amounts. They ranged from \$125 to \$200 per month. I called and called and was told they can do nothing. They surmise, my air conditioners and refrigerator are the culprits. And they won’t come to check out anything because it is an apartment building. So I made an agreement to pay installments on my previous bills. But the thing is, when a new bill comes in, I’m right back to square one. Now I get a turnoff notice every month, but so far so good. Con Edison says my income is a little higher than the criteria needed for reduced rates, HEAP, or a one-time assistance.

In response to me asking a majority of my neighbors how much their average bill is, ConEd maintains that just about everyone in the building gets preferential rates. I went to the building management and was told there was nothing they could do. So I said, “I guess I’ll have to get a job so I can afford the electric bills, but then if I do, my rent will increase”. Her response was “pretty much, that is the case.”

So, in essence, as a 72 year old woman, in order for me to be able to afford to live in a low-income senior citizen residence, I have to get a job, which in turn will raise my rent.

Sandy....BAH HUMBUG!!!



Photo posted by Vivian Demuth
on [Sandy Storyline](#)

FOR FIRST RESPONDERS, THE NATURE OF AN EMERGENCY DICTATES RESPONSE: protocols for rescuing flood survivors are different, of course, from those deployed in the aftermath of an earthquake. But once an initial crisis has ripened into an indeterminate future, how people on the ground fare is significantly shaped by factors such as race, economic class, and gender. However a disaster begins, with a killing in police custody or a Category 4 hurricane, a social emergency will be created.

What is a social emergency? In 2015, just after a grand jury refused to indict Darren Wilson for the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, the **Design Studio for Social Intervention** issued a paper calling for “Social Emergency Procedures.”

Right now, we are in a social emergency, but we are far from the ubiquitous fire escape signs or flight attendant announcements about oxygen masks. We are on our own, and as such, we can hardly be surprised that we don’t have a common understanding of a social emergency, let alone how to respond if we recognize we are in one.

Indeed, we humans tend to care most about things we are most affected by and overlook things we don't immediately experience. We are easily paralyzed by impotence during times of social crisis, or by rage as our political leadership frames emergency social situations like minor inconveniences. We believe that social emergency procedures could help people respond in ways that are commensurate to the urgency at hand, whether it's this week's verdict in Ferguson or the next....

Two underlying principles of this *Guide* are that:

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A SIMPLE CRISIS OR DISASTER that can be resolved by cleaning up the physical aftermath of a storm or fire and relocating people; and

NO CRISIS TOUCHES ON A SINGLE CAUSE OR ISSUE, all are intersectional, with overlapping impacts connecting race, gender, religion, orientation, ability, and every other characteristic that has been targeted for oppression. Every emergency, whatever triggered it, is also a social emergency, and social emergencies demand cultural responses.

As Dr. Mindy Fullilove, who calls herself an “urban psychiatrist,” working on “displacement, urban mental health, and collective consciousness,” put it in [an interview with The Mashed Up Americans](#),

Communities have cultural axes, and those determine how people are going to respond.... How do cultures feel about dependency? How do cultures feel about protest? The Japanese Americans who were interned, in a really extensive study done at that time, worked incredibly hard to organize themselves in the internment camp and to create order and to make it productive. That was a very cultural response, it very much came out of how their communities had been working together before internment.... So cultures are very different, the gifts and liabilities they are going to bring to the moment are very different.

There may well be similarities in different disasters, but no two are entirely alike just as no two human beings or human communities are exactly alike. All will be shaped as much by cultural conditions as by environmental and political ones. All require responses sensitive to the particular histories, values, and capacities of those affected. And all are best approached with the understanding that every natural disaster is also a civil crisis and a social emergency.

ORGANIC, SUPPORTIVE, INVASIVE

A core truth of the movement for cultural democracy is that the best—the most relevant, feasible, and compassionate—solutions arise from those most affected by a problem. You will find many references in this *Guide* to how essential community self-determination and organic community connection are to ethical, meaningful, effective artistic response. In this context, the opposite of organic is imposed: artists who parachute into a community under stress, think they know best, exploit local people for their knowledge or labor, add a line to their resumes, and leave without understanding the harm they have done.

In her interview for this *Guide*, Carol Bebelles laid out three valid levels of assistance artists and their allies can provide in an emergency. Readers may find it useful to locate themselves on this spectrum:

There is first line, second line, and third line and then there is offline. First line is those folks that are on the street doing the work and if you're not willing to be one of them or take their leadership then you're really second or third line—if you're involved. The second line is having their back, supporting them, helping them as you can. Advocating for them, being the somebody who helps people see the other side of the story when they sit down and talk about them being troublemakers and that kind of thing. The third line is folks that are not willing to do either of those things but are willing to put their resources to work on behalf of what the first line is doing. And the offline folks are the ones who are just sitting on the side looking.

Artists going into a community go in as second liners until they can discover what it is that the leadership needs and wants from them. If they want them on the front line then they can go to the front line. But they are second liners at least and they could become third liners. Hopefully not off liners!

We posit a fifth line (you could call it *the crossed line*): people who want to help or think they are helping, but in fact are imposing. This behavior is by no means unique to artists. Indeed, it is characteristic of far too many systematized or bureaucratized disaster responses. The annals of social history are crowded with credentialed experts who in the name of caring prescribe solutions for communities that they themselves would find intolerable. This cruel irony keeps being repeated because in conventional frameworks, experts are too often trained and encouraged to privilege measurements of success that in fact have little to do with lived experience. In their book *The Upcycle: Beyond Sustainability—Designing for Abundance*, William McDonough and Michael Braungart describe how conventional approaches would address the problem of housing earthquake survivors in Haiti:

Often businesses and government agencies will put metrics first and let all the other parts of their plan follow. Let's take, for example, building housing for people in Haiti, victims of the earthquake, now being relocated to a region of possible employment. The metric directing that effort is likely to be to house the most people at the lowest cost. The tactic for lowering that cost customarily would be to diminish the amount of materials used—more wood or cement or steel or composite board creates more cost. The strategy for diminishing the amount of required materials would be to compress all dimensions to the absolute minimum—a ten-foot-tall interior wall is more expensive than an eight-foot wall, for example, so lower the ceilings. The goal would be to create the smallest structures that are still habitable.

These same experts would never choose to house their own loved ones in phone booths-sized shelters. They would consider feelings and spirits, cultural meanings and relationships. They would remember that delivering shelter under such conditions must also be delivering compassion in a form that can be felt and understood by the recipients, offering a glimpse of realistic and meaningful

possibility. They would have to know people's thoughts and feelings, information that can only be obtained in relationship.

In McDonough's and Braungart's experience, conventional planners and problem-solvers privilege:

- (1) Metrics of efficiency: House the most people at the lowest cost.
- (2) Tactics: Reduce the amount and cost of material needed for construction.
- (3) Strategies: Compress dimensions to save square inches and feet of materials.
- (4) Goals: Create the smallest habitable structure for a human being.

Meanwhile, they ignore the values and principles that ought to top the list in any effort to alleviate suffering and support possibility.

Metrics, tactics, strategies, and concrete goals must follow from the values cherished by those directly affected and the principles that shape their cultures.

What if before specific approaches could be considered, it was understood that any plan for post-earthquake housing in Haiti had to align with the values of mutuality, reciprocity, interdependence, sustainability, dignity for all ages, protecting the land and the life it sustains, multiplying economic and social opportunity, drawing on local traditions and creativity?

Throughout this *Guide*, you'll find experienced practitioners expressing how essential it is that artistic response to disasters and emergencies take cultural democracy values of pluralism, participation, and equity as their framework. They stress following the leadership of people on the ground, working in ways that amplify their knowledge and wisdom, helping to create space for their own articulation of needs. They stress that ultimately, the value of this work is judged by those rooted in the affected community, that community benefit must trump artistic accomplishment—although both can be compatible.

Some people question whether artists even ought to travel to distant places to offer artistic response. In an interview for this *Guide*, Dustin Washington of the **American Friends Service Committee in Seattle** counseled artists to ask themselves these questions first: "Are you already involved in collective organizing, systemic relationships, and systemic analysis in your own hometown? Do you have an understanding of structural racism and capitalism, the roots of crisis?" He urged addressing what is happening in your own backyard before moving out to another crisis. Others stress how essential it is to acquire grassroots knowledge about local culture, conditions, and needs, whether you are offering artistic response in the place where you live or many miles away.

In a conversation with Aimee Chang, then Manager of Public Programs at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, as part of **Transforma**, a 2005-2010 collective art project in New Orleans, Rick Lowe, founder of Houston's Project Row Houses, emphasized establishing trust, learning and serving community needs foremost:

The one side about community-engaged work right now that is still lagging is that it is still so much about the individual artist's vision of what they need to do in a community context. So there isn't a strong trust that artists bring something

to the table other than their agenda, that they are engaged in the process to help it move. . . . We have not established ourselves as a legitimate participant in serious issues that are going on in neighborhoods or cities. . . . My question is: how do artists that are working within the community have some aspect of their work rest on the idea that they are doing something meaningful to make an impact on the community or environment beyond what was there before and in a way that balances or rivals the impact they get from it?"

A foundational principle of this *Guide*—as with all community-based cultural work—is that community comes first. This stance demands that artistic response to a crisis be grounded in, congruent with, and responsive to what matters most to those directly affected by the crisis.

Arlene Goldbard, Chief Policy Wonk



*New Orleans, 2008: The Safehouse of the Fundred/Pay Dirt project led by conceptual artist Mel Chin.
One of three **Transforma** pilot projects.*

SIX PRINCIPLES FOR ARTS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

by Amelia Brown, Minister of Emergency Arts, USDAC National Cabinet

HURRICANE KATRINA. These two words that have impacted my life in countless ways. Throughout my professional experience spanning more than 20 years, 30 countries, and four continents, this one disaster has deeply impacted my personal and professional development. The recovery work from this disaster is not over and lessons continue to evolve.

Serving in New Orleans helped me develop a deeper understanding that emergencies can lead to opportunities. One of the most precious opportunities is to rebuild community with people gathered around an emergency who were once strangers and become family. These relationships are one of our greatest community assets.

Experience in emergencies has propelled my ongoing exploration of the intersection of arts, community development, and emergency management. Through years of hands-on work and research, I saw a need for an extensive network, expansive field, and central resource to support those working at this particular intersection. Through my self-designed interdisciplinary master's degree, I examined the traditionally independent systems of art and emergency management, researched collaborative approaches toward sustainable community development, and created a new integrated system that displays how artists play a key role in emergency management.

This lays the foundation for what I call **Emergency Arts**, a resource to advance community resilience through the arts. Today, I consult, write, speak, and organize projects related to Emergency Arts from presenting at the **International Award for Public Art, Cities of Climate Change Conference in New Zealand** to managing the Creative CityMaking Minneapolis program fostering partnerships between local artists and government staff to develop innovative approaches to address disparities. I continue to work towards identifying and creating opportunities within multiple emergencies, navigating the intricacies of those emergencies, and championing relationships that will build common ground and increase creativity for communities in crisis.

1. WITHIN EMERGENCIES ARE OPPORTUNITIES. Emergencies not only create new problems but compound existing issues. They also offer opportunities to create new solutions. We do not welcome disasters, but when disasters strike our communities we can transform chaos into change. Disasters reveal historic and systemic issues in new ways, raising our awareness and urgency to address them. For example, longstanding inequalities in housing and transportation were exacerbated in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Disruptions that challenge everyday patterns and procedures offer opportunities to confront the status quo with innovative community-based practices. When systems are broken open, new possibilities emerge. We can challenge conventions in how we relate to one another and systems to collectively address issues impacting our communities. The

dynamic state of disaster stirs movement, whether it is flood waters on the land or protests on our political landscape. In emergencies we have opportunities to rebuild ourselves, our communities, and our local and national systems.

2. COMMUNITIES FACE MULTIPLE EMERGENCIES. To maximize opportunities within emergencies, we need to understand the emergencies themselves. Professional and governmental emergency management agencies administer systems to decrease communities' vulnerability to hazards and increase communities' capacity to recover from disasters. A primary step for emergency management is to identify the type of hazard a community is currently facing or may face in the future. Types of hazards range and evolve depending on the emergency management entity, community involvement, and other factors. For example, according to the Department of Homeland Security, there are three types of hazards:

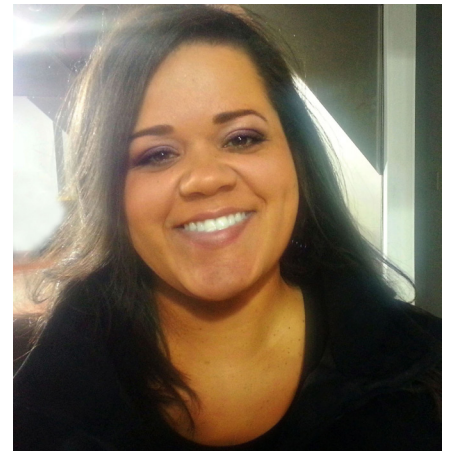
- (1) **Natural.** Natural hazards include earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires.
- (2) **Technological.** Technological hazards include airplane crashes, train derailments, and power failures.
- (3) **Human Caused.** Human-caused hazards can be a chemical, cyber, or violent attack at a school or workplace.

I find the two definitions included in the **100 Resilient Cities framework** pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation useful: emergencies can be (1) Chronic Stresses; or (2) Acute Shocks. Chronic stresses impact us daily or in cycles such as chronic unemployment, violence, or water deficiencies. Acute shocks are sudden distressing events such as terrorist attacks, earthquakes or floods.

Hazards can interact with one another such as in the case of Hurricane Katrina, which was a natural, human-made, and technological hazard. A storm, engineering, and related policy failures, led to the breaking of the levees which caused fatal flooding. This combination of hazards contributed to Katrina being identified as one of the strongest, costliest, and deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history. The impacts of a hurricane, a natural disaster, are compounded for those living in poverty, a chronic stress.

Understanding types of hazards and how they impact each other helps to develop and implement plans to address emergencies. This is crucial to maximize opportunities in emergencies.

3. EMERGENCIES ARE PARADOXICAL. Opportunities in the midst of disaster do not negate, minimize, ignore, or otherwise discount the suffering of an emergency. Opportunities should not take advantage of those impacted by an emergency. Communities are priorities in emergencies. Disasters challenge and change communities, forcing them to live with permanent loss. Any effort to respond must honor the ongoing challenges of rebuilding communities in crisis. To navigate these fragile situations and work effectively in communities, we must hold both the trauma of an emergency and the triumph of surviving that emergency; the reality of daily pain and the reality of daily actions needed to relieve that pain; the recognition of destruction and the respect to rebuild.



Amelia Brown, Minister of Emergency Arts, USDAC National Cabinet
Emergency Arts

It is important to hold the complexity and compassion that are requirements for this work. We can be part of the solution not only to immediate needs but to chronic problems by working together—artists, emergency managers, funders—to identify the types of emergencies we are facing and opportunities within them to make great change.

4. CRISES NEED CREATIVITY. Artists with skill and experience in participatory, collaborative work can hold a central role in building community relationships. To develop effective emergency management plans, community involvement is crucial. Emergency management planning without the input of community members it claims to serve runs the risk of unintended consequences. These outcomes may be lack of community participation in services, initiatives that address secondary or tertiary community needs, or programs that do not reach their goals. In addition, many communities have histories of distrust with external forces entering their neighborhoods to extract information or dictate policies that compound trauma. Artists can implement creative strategies to gain, record, and share community insight to inform emergency management plans. They can facilitate opportunities for engagement in which community members can define their own needs to inform their own prevention of or recovery from a disaster. Art can overcome social barriers such as language and culture. When artists invite community members to co-create, collaborative processes that reflect community values, perspectives and life experiences become possible. Crises need creativity to increase community participation in their own plans for emergency management.

5. INTERMEDIARIES BUILD COMMON GROUND. Intermediaries are bridge builders who facilitate collaborations between artists, agencies, and community members to effectively serve disaster-impacted communities. Intermediaries can act as a “translator” between artists and agencies to communicate their common interests and goals. Such services are needed to connect organizations that function separately from one another in emergencies, increasing their capacity to reach and serve people. Disconnection increases misunderstanding, fear and distrust. In my experience, potential collaborators can overlook one another. Intermediaries recognize the power of cooperation between individuals working within systems and those working outside those systems who share the exact same goals. Intermediaries help foster relationships, revealing and building on the value of working in non-traditional collaborations in times of crisis. We can help artists navigate systems and help agencies work with artists in a way that amplifies assets for the benefit of our communities. Intermediaries identify common ground and maximize resources to increase community impact.

6. INTERMEDIARIES WORK THEMSELVES OUT OF A JOB. Intermediaries are dedicated to introducing, supporting, and advancing relationships. Facilitating collaborations between people and organizations with varied resources can increase the tools and potential we have to address shared goals and outcomes. Intermediaries eventually work themselves out of a job with agencies on the ground as they foster sharing of resources and build a foundation strong enough for intermediaries to exit and agencies to sustain the work. They move through emergencies with the aim of leaving partners in good working relationships to

advance their own communities. Intermediaries' work is part of building a field in which artists, agencies, and communities can work effectively with one another in emergencies.

Effective development of this field includes building relationships, policies, procedures and structures that support artists at every level of emergency management. Collaborations in this field will change the future of emergency management. I envision a time where there will be no emergency management plans that do not have dedicated arts policies and procedures. There will be no emergency management agencies that do not have artists as part of their leadership team. There will be no community organizations that do not recognize and support the value of artists in addressing emergencies in their communities. There will be Emergency Arts.

We live in times that need solutions to the rapidly growing number and type of emergencies. To plan and respond effectively, we need to look at art as an integral part of solutions that can repair community trust as well as infrastructure. I envision **Emergency Arts** as an intermediary resource that can facilitate a collaborative, cross-sector network that addresses a multitude of disasters facing our communities. Whether these disasters are natural or human made, the integration of arts within emergency management is essential to building community resilience. My experience with emergencies has influenced me to identify and create opportunities to support relationships, our greatest community assets. This is an especially important consideration for communities that have been historically left out of decision-making processes in building their own communities. Through Emergency Arts, we can champion relationships that build common ground and foster resilient communities together.



View of part of **Damon Davis' "All Hands on Deck"** in Ferguson, Missouri.



« WE THE »

RESILIENT

HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE

PART TWO: CRAFTING ARTISTIC RESPONSE

POSTER BY ERNESTO YERENA MONTEJANO

AVAILABLE FOR FREE DOWNLOAD

AT THE AMPLIFIER FOUNDATION



IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS GUIDE, “artistic response” means arts-based work responding to disaster or other community-wide emergency, much but not all created in collaboration with community members directly affected.

Part Two of *Art Became The Oxygen* offers a description and examples of key types of artistic response. It makes no claim to be a comprehensive listing. It includes mostly U.S.-based and contemporary work, whereas artists and communities have been responding to crisis since the beginning of human community. Our aim is to extract the essence of this work from both new and existing research and documentation, including interviews with practitioners.

WHAT CAN ART DO?

Most artistic response pursues one or more of three main objectives.

CARE, COMFORT, AND CONNECTION: The intention may be to offer comfort, care, or connection in the immediate wake of a crisis (for example, in temporary shelters following a storm or fire). Caron Atlas, Minister of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts on the USDAC National Cabinet, lives in Brooklyn. She was deeply engaged in volunteering at the Park Slope Armory evacuation shelter following Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

In a **Summer 2013 GIA Reader article**, she described what happened and offered advice for future artistic response. At the invitation of a city council member, Caron, who directs **Arts & Democracy**, joining with artists and cultural organizations from the neighborhood and across the city,

created a wellness center in a corner of the armory drill floor, with programs that included arts and culture, exercise, massage, religious services, a Veterans Day commemoration, an election-watching party, film screenings, therapy dogs, AA meetings, and stress relief. In essence, the wellness center became the living room of the armory—a place where the residents could come to talk, reflect, create, build community, and even enjoy themselves. It served the staff and volunteers as well.

The article portrays in vivid detail the ways that many different artists—a jazz musician, a dancer, actors and others—interacted with shelter residents, becoming essential to the humane functioning of the facility and to the dignity, respect, and humanity of the residents. Comfort and care were important, but just as much, the work was to cultivate people’s agency to act and to advocate for those in the shelters.

In a 2017 interview for this *Guide*, Caron described how artists made a difference by just being present, getting to know people, providing something that offered pleasure and the opportunity to connect:

We had a street musician—those were great skills, being a street musician and being able to be in a chaotic situation. So the meals came late and people were really mad and in a shelter with 500 people that was not a good situation. People would line up when food was supposed to come and they’d be in line for an hour. He played the line and they’d be entertained. He was from New Orleans and very personable, he got to know everybody.

One of our best artist volunteers was somebody who was already volunteering as a human being, not as an artist. He knew everybody's stories. It turned out he was a rock musician and so he started doing sing-alongs because people loved to sing. He would have never called himself a community artist and he wasn't trained to be a community artist but he loved people and that was very effective and found out what people loved to do. He became the core team with me and one other person who came every night and showed a movie. People came and talked to her—people who wouldn't speak to anyone else spoke to her because she figured out that nighttime was a scary time for people there. So she just took the initiative and rented a movie and showed it and sat at a table and people came and told her their life stories.

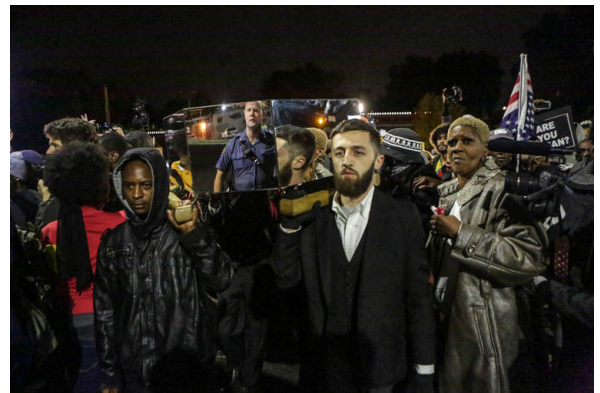
In offering care, comfort, and connection, artistic response can help people feel fully seen as dimensional human beings rather than only as exemplars of suffering. It can create safe and generative space to share stories in people's own words, to experience their truths being received with dignity and respect. It can demonstrate commonality, helping to counter isolation. It can remind people of the beauty and meaning of the world, glimpsing a hope anchored by reality.

PROTEST: In situations like Ferguson, Missouri, after the 2014 killing of Michael Brown, the uprising in Baltimore, Maryland, after the 2015 death in custody of Freddie Gray, and the fatal 2014 chokehold that ended Eric Garner's life in Staten Island, New York, artists have risen to create powerful images and experiences that amplify and focus protest, penetrating the media and public awareness.

De Andrea Nichols designed **The Mirror Casket**, a coffin faced entirely in mirrored glass, “to challenge on-lookers to question, empathize, and reflect on their own roles in remediating the crisis of countless deaths that young men of color experience in the United States at the hands of police and community violence.” The Mirror Casket was carried in many demonstrations before it became part of the collection of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington. Here's how De's website describes the project:

The Mirror Casket is a visual structure, performance, and call to action for justice in the aftermath of the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. Created by a team of seven community artists and organizers, the mirrored casket responds to a Ferguson resident's call for “a work of art that evokes more empathy into this circumstance” following the burning of a Michael Brown memorial on September 23, 2014.

With an aim to evoke reflection and empathy for the deaths of young people of color who have lost their lives unjustly in the United States and worldwide, The Mirror Casket was performed as part of a “Funeral Procession of Justice” during the Ferguson October protests. As community members carried it from the site of Michael Brown's death to the police department of the community, its mirrors challenged viewers to look within and see their reflections as both whole and shattered, as both solution and problem, as both victim and aggressor. The Mirror Casket has since been used throughout related protests and marches.



In an early 2017 interview, De spoke of the need to create a database of artists “connecting people who have similar ideas who are working in similar media, but also people who are in the same cities, in response to political actions, civic actions within cities, as well as rapid response efforts to moments of injustice.”

In the USDAC’s *An Act of Collective Imagination*, published in September, 2015, we wrote about a series of actions taken to bring meaning, creativity, and social imagination to a community galvanized by the killing of Mike Brown:

To focus on just one exemplary situation, Ferguson, MO: USDAC Cultural Agent Roseann Weiss of the **St. Louis Regional Arts Commission** made rapid micro-grants after Ferguson through their Community Social Impact Fund for drama classes, interactive public food events, civic matchmaking tools for artists and community groups, and more. The Action Support Committee organized by musician Taleb Kweli made small grants to a range of community programs in Ferguson, including arts initiatives. **Artists Against Police Violence** has compiled a large repository of images. **The Ferguson Moment** engaged theater artists in responding. Artist **Damon Davis** papered Ferguson with hands-up photographs. And a year later, as protests renewed, **many artists** found a way to honor Ferguson’s cultural fabric.

Most of the arts work we mentioned nearly two years ago continues in some form. **Artists Against Police Violence** maintains an “online space featuring graphics and artwork to be used for communities against police murders of Black people. We are calling all artists across the U.S. and the world to rise up against anti-Black police violence, with a focus on Black artists in particular. We strive to feature and generate a diverse collection of hi-res images to empower families, protests, social media, the streets and beyond.” They issue a periodic digest, offer advice about avoiding co-optation of specifically Black images by non-Black artists and about not erasing marginalized groups (e.g., LGBTQ, immigrants, persons with disabilities) from the struggle.

The Ferguson Moment continues as a repository of information and resources pertaining to the civil rights movement galvanized by Black Lives Matter. Although not frequently updated, the site features downloadable syllabi and information on *Every 28 Hours*, a compilation of one-minute plays which has received staged readings from Ferguson to Trinity Rep in Providence to ACT in San Francisco.

Damon Davis’s “hands up” images, highlighting the posture that quickly came to be a symbol of illegitimate official violence and a statement of empathy with Mike Brown, were shown at the **Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in 2016**. His series canonizing fallen youth illustrated an essay on “**Belonging as a Cultural Right**” and the USDAC’s Policy on Belonging, published in *Othering & Belonging journal* in 2017.

Every issue that encroaches on community and individual well-being stimulates protest art. Consider the song **#Ican’tkeepquiet**, emerging from the Women’s Marches in January 2017. Los Angeles musician MILCK wrote the song and taught it online to a group of women who came together to perform it first during the demonstration on the streets of Washington, DC. It went viral on YouTube. The

site makes sheet music and guide recordings freely available and collects stories of speaking out in the face of repression.

Writers gathered in 100 events across the globe on January 15, 2017, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., under the banner of **#WRITERSRESIST**, asserting their commitment to free, just, and compassionate democracy in the face of official actions that shake these commitments.

This category of artistic response differs in certain respects from the others included in this *Guide*. Much more of the work listed above was created by individual artists, rather than emerging from a collective process among those most directly affected by issues. The resulting works are sometimes shared for community use or in contexts that benefit movements. Just as often they also have a life as art objects or cultural commodities: museum or gallery shows, staged and ticketed performances, recorded music sales, and so on.

As a vehicle of protest, artistic response can share the realities of those most directly affected by emergencies, countering cover-stories and distant analyses. It can reach people emotionally and somatically, as well as intellectually, adding impact. It can generate images, sounds, and other experiences that build awareness and lodge in memory, affecting future actions. It can illustrate what is broken and offer powerful images of healing and possibility.

REFRAMING AND RESILIENCE: This aspect of artistic response engages those affected by a crisis in creative practices over time that help them reframe and integrate their experience, building resilience and strengthening social fabric.

What happens months and years after the type of emergency that evokes rapid artistic response? More and more, we know that trauma—individual or collective—leaves its imprint on body and spirit. Human beings are resilient, to be sure, but resilience names a potential, not a guarantee that it will be realized. Often, potent factors work against it. If survivors of crisis are treated as powerless, made to feel their stories don't count, pulsed through systems designed more for the convenience of their operators than for people's well-being, that can keep them stuck reliving their pain and loss without a new story going forward.

The survivors of a crisis may have lost much that was formerly a ground for connection: homes and streets, meeting-places, sites of public memory may be burned to the ground, collapsed underwater, blown away in gale-force winds. The businesses that employed them may have moved on or folded on account of the lack of consumer spending—fewer people, less discretionary income. Neighbors may have been relocated, taking with them the sense of a shared history and future. Cultural fabric can be rewoven, but that takes time.

For resilience to evolve fully, certain things need to happen. First-person truth must be spoken and heard with dignity and respect. People must be supported in telling their own stories and in developing those stories toward greater possibility. Significant time and commitment are required to reconstitute community from the broken pieces crisis leaves behind. What can move an overwhelming sense of loss toward a new, collective sense of possibility?



Consider **Cry You One**. Created by the New Orleans-based companies ArtSpot Productions and Mondo Bizarro, this outdoor performance includes song, story, dance, and an accompanying online storytelling platform focusing on “the heart of Louisiana’s disappearing wetlands. **Cry You One** started as a local project but expanded to a national phenomenon, attracting funding and attention from many sources. **Cry You One** celebrates the people and cultures of South Louisiana while turning clear eyes on the crisis of our vanishing coast.”

The piece is still being performed around the U.S. The website offers first-person stories to help educate and inspire involvement in the movement to save Coastal Louisiana. At the site, profiles of activists and storytellers provide a glimpse of the personal testimonies gathered to create this script. Although many people interact with a project such as **Cry You One** primarily by witnessing a performance, the project’s impact is much wider. It circles out from the individuals and groups who co-created the stories and who have a stake in the project’s capacity to inspire and activate, encompassing audience members, who are asked to take part as well. As Nicole Gurgel put it in an [essay on the Alternate ROOTS website](#), in **Cry You One**...

the audience is active for the duration of the performance. We trekked through the disappearing wetlands of Southeastern Louisiana, we danced, and sang, and, at the end, were invited to bow along with the cast. At one point, we were asked to mark our faces with dirt – to touch this disappearing land and carry it on our skin. Decolonizing Aesthetics are visceral, embodied, durational. They live with you; they require a different level of commitment from artist and audience; they leave us asking, “what are we going to do about it?”

The spine of such work is to receive stories from people directly affected by the circumstances depicted, to honor those stories as the material of art, and to return the work to the storytellers and others who can be inspired to see their own experience in a new light of awareness and possibility.

When aimed at supporting reframing and resilience, artistic response can bring to light stories that internalize powerlessness, catalyzing new stories of social and environmental justice realized. It can unearth buried history, revealing keys in the collective past that open the door to a self-determining future. It can nourish common purpose, pointing the way to positive action.

More and more, responses to disaster are incorporating all three modes, with activism that braids art, spirituality, and politics. As **Kelly Hayes and Desiree Kane reported** from Standing Rock in September 2016, people “are using prayer, community building, art and action to make the world at large aware of their struggle to preserve what they cherish.”

2013 image by Melissa Cardona of
Cry You One.



A RANGE OF ARTISTIC RESPONSE

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES ARE OFFERED TO ILLUSTRATE A RANGE OF MODELS AND APPROACHES employed by artistic response to disaster, emergency, or ongoing crisis. Some are single events and others, sustained collaborations over multiple years. Other USDAC resources for project ideas and inspirations are also available. Check out our [HI-LI Database page](#) for high impact/low infrastructure models that can work in many contexts; our [USDAC Super PAC page](#) for other ways to engage participation; and download the [#DareToImagine](#) and [#RevolutionOfValues Toolkits](#) and ancillary materials for yet more ideas.

STORY-GATHERING

[Sandy Storyline](#) is widely admired as a rich repository of first-person stories relating to the experience of Hurricane Sandy, not just the immediate emergency of being displaced or injured, but also accounts of how the experience affected lives for years afterwards. The project was conceived and co-directed by Rachel Falcone and Michael Premo, working in collaboration with [a large team and many sponsors and supporters](#).

The site puts it concisely:

By engaging people in sharing their own experiences and visions, Sandy Storyline is building a community-generated narrative of the storm and its aftermath that seeks to build a more just and sustainable future. Sandy Storyline features audio, video, photography and text stories – contributed by residents, citizen journalists, and professional producers—that are shared through an immersive web documentary and interactive exhibitions.

An easy-to-navigate website is an essential container for a project like this because it's key to gather as many stories as possible. To submit stories online, site visitors clicked to a sign-in page to share their names and emails, which registered them for the site, allowing them to add material at any time. That link takes the storyteller to a page with simple instructions for providing a story in the form of text, audio, photography, and/or video. Understanding that not everyone may have access to a computer (especially in the aftermath of a superstorm), Sandy Storyline also offered people a toll-free phone number and an email address to submit stories. Stories were tagged thematically: art, coming together, displacement, etc. They are also searchable by keyword, including names.

In a [2015 interview for Springboard with Amelia Brown](#), Minister of Emergency Arts on the USDAC's National Cabinet, project co-director Rachel Falcone described the impulse that animated Sandy Storyline. "After the storm there is a lot of connection among story; everybody has something to share and there is a process. For us, we wanted to both allow the space for people to share their very personal experiences, but also build connection, understanding, and relevance."

Here's [a beautiful story by musician Ilyana Kadushin](#), who performed at the Park Slope Armory shelter (the same space mentioned by Caron Atlas in Part One), posted on November 10, 2012:

A few weeks ago, my husband and music partner James Harrell and myself performed some of our music at The Park Slope Armory in Brooklyn.

The Armory had been transformed into an evacuation shelter for senior citizens evacuated from the Rockaways during Hurricane Sandy. The Armory was literally packed with seniors and it took so many volunteers to keep it running every day.

Imagine being away from your home and all its comforts, where you are crammed in with so many others, the lights always staying on, with no privacy.

The Arts and Wellness area they set up at Armory was so great and gave so many opportunities for the evacuees to transcend the circumstances through arts, expression and special attention from those involved. We were honored to be a part of it.

We planned a set of our original music and the first song that came to mind was one of our songs called “Joy of Life.” It perfectly captures a state of gratitude for being alive and for each moment of our life.

James played it on guitar and we both sang and harmonized together. We also gave the group some shakers and percussion instruments, to provide some extra energy to the song.

After we performed this song called “Joy of Life,” one of the women in the group, Latisha, who was blind and had been living in this shelter for almost 2 weeks, stood up and said that our song made her want to give a speech to everyone listening.

“We have all been through a lot these past weeks, it’s been hard, but we have to find the joy, find the joy in every day.”

This moment will go down as one of my favorites as a musician and as a human.



Park Slope Armory 2012 from “*Humanity After the Storm*” by Caron Atlas

The Sandy Storyline body of stories has been recognized as a powerful work of art: the project won The Tribeca Film Festival’s 2013 BOMBAY SAPPHIRE® Award for Transmedia, the first award given in the Storyscapes category, recognizing innovative storytelling.

Sandy Storyline offers some important guidance for artistic response projects: openness, accessibility, providing a framework that encourages people to speak their own truths in their own words, finding powerful ways to connect individual stories into a collective narrative that serves the community.

OTHER STORY-GATHERING IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

PROJECT JUKEBOX is an online oral history archive of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound in April 1989. Project Jukebox is the digital branch of the Oral History Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and given its age, one of the first online repositories to integrate text with recordings and images. Many of the stories were published in a 2009 book, “*The Spill: Personal Stories from the Exxon Valdez Disaster*.”

LIVING WITH DISASTER was a project of the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience to create two digital story DVDs, complete with teaching guides, featuring stories by young people affected by flooding near Newcastle, New South Wales in 2007, Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria in 2009, and the Lennox Head and Ballina 2010 tornado. You'll find one of the short digital stories at [ACMI's site](#).

STORY CIRCLES: The USDAC's annual civic ritual, the **People's State of the Union**, turns on our adaptation of Story Circles, a simple and powerful mode of story-sharing that can be used to build a composite picture of experience. Download the PSOTU Toolkit and imagine adapting these methods to create a collective portrait in story form for a community that experienced a major crisis.

PUBLIC ART

Emergencies are mostly sudden and often unexpected. The example we're using here began as a community murals project in a town of 50,000 in southwestern Missouri. Then a storm happened.

In May 2011, an EF-5 tornado, with winds in excess of 200 miles per hour, destroyed one-third of Joplin—homes, businesses, schools, vehicles, and more—taking the lives of 161 residents. Months before the tornado, Joplin had been accepted as one of the participating communities in the Mid-America Arts Alliance Community Mural Project open to small towns. Tonkawa, OK, Newton, KS, Joplin, MO, Arkadelphia, AR, Waco, TX, and Hasting, NE, were each chosen by competitive application to receive a three-month residency. Dave Loewenstein (a visual artist, USDAC Cultural Agent and convener of the Lawrence, Kansas, Field Office) oversaw community design and painting processes open to participation from anyone and everyone. The entire project is documented in *Called to Walls*, a wonderful film by Nicholas Ward and Amber Hansen, who also worked as mural assistants.

The tornado had a huge impact on mural project plans, as described in a July 2011 entry in [Dave's blog on the project](#):

Nearly a year ago while finishing The Imagineers mural in Newton, Kansas, we were visited by a small contingent of artists and arts advocates from Joplin, Missouri. Sharon Beshore, her husband Lance, and artist Jorge Leyva made the trip to discuss the possibility of bringing the Mid-America Arts Alliance Mural Project to Joplin the following summer. Nine months of planning, grant writing, and fundraising later and we are here engaged in a project that has taken on dramatic new significance since Joplin was hit by a massive tornado on May 22nd.

In the days following the tornado, plans for the mural project were unsure. Would our Joplin hosts still want to carry it forward? If so, what role could art play as the community worked to recover, restore, and rebuild? And, how would these new circumstances impact the content and type of art we would make? To help answer these questions, Nicholas, Amber, and I traveled to Joplin in early June. There we met at the Spiva Center for the Arts with artists, arts advocates and others who were interested in

discussing the purpose and potential of community-based art in the face of great challenges. The two meetings were filled with honest thoughtful dialogue about the capacity of art to help in healing and recovery in times of difficulty. And in the end, those who attended the meetings expressed overwhelming support for doing the mural and possibly a series of temporary art works located in areas affected by the tornado. The project would go forward, there was no doubt.

The resulting mural, “The Butterfly Effect: Dreams Take Flight,” was dedicated on September 25, 2011. In Joplin as in other project sites, the process was highly participatory, inclusive, and public. There were community meetings and drawing workshops to generate ideas and imagery. From these meetings, 15 or so community members self-selected to take part in the design team along with the artists who make up the mural team. The design team’s process considers:

- The significance of this moment in the community’s history.
- The input we had received from community meetings and drawing workshops.
- Where the mural was going to be located.
- Who the audiences viewing the mural would be.
- What we wanted to communicate.

Clarifying the mural theme and framework was a special challenge in Joplin, because a conflict emerged about the mural’s intention. Naturally, the recent and deeply distressing experience of the tornado was foremost in everyone’s minds, but some of the city’s powers-that-be felt strongly that it must not be the heart of the mural. The director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau turned up at one of the meetings to say: “The mural downtown is preferably to stay on a Route 66, welcome to Joplin-type thing, not a memorial for the tornado.... I’m not speaking officially for the city, but on the City Manager’s behalf, he’d prefer the one downtown to stay Route 66 or as we’ll call it, the flypaper that gets people to stop in the downtown area.”

As the community and design team had already invested considerable time and energy in learning what the people of Joplin wanted to feature, members were concerned that their wishes would be ignored. Dave reassured them that “the theme of the mural, the content of it, what you would like it to be about, this is up to you. It’s up to you. And if that conflicts perhaps with what the city wants in some way, I think we need to have that conversation. You have the power to tell the story you want to tell, and we’ll find a place that it can go. If it can’t be on that wall that they have previously thought of, we’ll find a different place.”

In the collaborative mural process, drawing workshops for kids were important. *Called to Walls* captures one in which Dave led the children through a discussion about dreams, then offered this prompt: “So what if all of the tigers and all of the frogs and all of the plants and all of the people and all of the other animals and buildings and bicycles here in Joplin had a dream together? What would that dream be if it was dreaming about how it wanted to be in the future? What would the dream of Joplin be? Instead of talk about it, we’re going to draw it. Dream a dream for Joplin.” It turned out that the truthful and hopeful narrative images provided by Joplin’s children held the key, as Dave explained:

We realized we had this remarkable group of drawings that the kids had been making, and we had this space across the street that we realized could serve as a perfect gallery for them. So we got them all together and one night we created an exhibition that was solely of these young people's drawings. It was just a one-night show, but tons of people showed up. It was amazing to see the deep conversations and serious looking... And looking at them, we realized that they had in the most beautiful honest way, told the story of the storm. And so what we chose to do was collage together the different parts of their drawings to tell a narrative of what happened when the tornado came and the recovery afterwards.



Design team member Marta Churchwell described the mural as “the perfect gift for us right here, right now. But beyond this mural, the larger gift I think is that ability, that process that we have learned about how to engage people, how to bring people together, how to work together and collaborate and initiate these conversations that might never have taken place.”

“The Butterfly Effect” project reveals important lessons for artistic response: preparedness to respond to whatever arises; having and maintaining a strong, ethical, collaborative, and open community process; supporting community members in putting their truth forward even in the face of official opposition; and leaving something of value to the local community both in terms of product and process.

OTHER PUBLIC ART IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

JOHN T. WILLIAMS MEMORIAL TOTEM POLE: This video tells the story of a totem pole that was carved and installed in Seattle to commemorate the life and work of John Williams, a First Nations woodcarver, who was shot and killed by police in August 2010.

EVACUATEER is a group that recruits, trains, and manages 500 evacuation volunteers called Evacuteers who assist with New Orleans’ public evacuation plan. They prepare and register evacuees, ensuring their ability to evacuate safely and with dignity.

Evacuspots mark the pick-up locations for the New Orleans City-Assisted Evacuation. Designed by public artist Doug Kornfeld, the 16 14-foot high stainless steel statues are created to withstand 200 years of wear and tear.

TRANSFORMA was a five-year collective project based in post-Katrina New Orleans, initiated by artists Jessica Cusick, Sam Durant, Rick Lowe, and Robert Ruello. Their aims:

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we formed Transforma to expand opportunities for artists to use their creativity in the rebuilding of New Orleans. As practitioners within the field, we had seen art and culture become increasingly commercialized, limiting the opportunities for artists to work in public or socially engaged practices. To counter this trend,

Transforma strategically supported such practices with direct financial assistance, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. Generally it encouraged a greater emphasis on the role of artists, the arts, and culture in addressing the social and political needs that confront our society.

Transforma evolved into a massive project making small grants and providing assistance to a range of artistic response. Three pilots kicked it off:

- “Home, New Orleans?,” a community-based, arts-focused network of artists, neighbors, organizers, schools, and universities to create positive change in New Orleans;
- “Operation Pay Dirt/Fundred Dollar Bill, designed by artist Mel Chin, this nationwide drawing project brought three million original interpretations by children and adults of the U.S. one-hundred dollar bill to Congress to advocate for an innovative and effective method of transforming New Orleans into a city with lead-safe soil; and
- “Plessy Park,” initiated by community activist Reggie Lawson of the Crescent City Peace Alliance, artist Ron Bechet, and other community members to acknowledge the site on which Homer Plessy was arrested on June 7, 1892, which led to the historic Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson, legalizing segregation through “separate but equal” laws.

The full Transforma project is documented along with essays and commentary in a book downloadable from the [site](#).

MIRROR SHIELD PROJECT: Cannupa Hanska Luger was born on the Standing Rock reservation in North Dakota, and he visited there repeatedly during the Water Protectors encampment and actions in 2016. He designed a mirrored shield, which he described in [an interview with the L.A. Times](#):

I was inspired by these activists in the Ukraine. These women – old women and children – and they came out and carried mirrors from their bathrooms and into the street to show these riot policemen what they looked like. From the photos I saw, it seemed profoundly effective. I wanted to bring that same level of recognition to the front lines there.

But Standing Rock is in the middle of nowhere. I didn’t want people to bring mirrors to the front line and get hit with batons and cause more damage than good. So what we needed was a mirrored shield. So I came up with a simple, easy and cheap design to make these mirrored shields using vinyl and Masonite – materials you can find in any hardware store. From one sheet of Masonite, you could make six shields.

I started making them after that Sunday that they were hitting people with hoses. I personally made close to 100 of them. But then another group out of Minneapolis made 500. I have no idea how many are in circulation.

GENOCIDE MEMORIAL PARK: The Barefoot Artists site documents the work of Lily Yeh, Urban Alchemist on the USDAC National Cabinet, and colleagues in many locations. The Genocide Memorial Park, Rugerero Survivors Village, Gisenyi, Rwanda evolved from an initial visit to a mass grave in 2004.

GRAN FURY was a visual arts collective that grew out of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) in the late 1980s through the mid-1990s. Their best-known works were posters calling attention to the AIDS pandemic in the face of official indifference or opposition. They also swapped out copies of the *New York Times* in newspaper machines for their own *New York Crimes* publication, created signs that mimicked official street warnings, and devised agit-prop performances. A large collection of Gran Fury images resides at the **New York Public Library**. Here's one of several accounts of the work at the online newsletter *Hyperallergic*.

POETRY AND NARRATIVE

THE OFF/PAGE PROJECT was a collaboration between The Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR) and the literary non-profit Youth Speaks, partnering investigative reporters and poets to unearth and share stories that need telling. *Broken City Poets*, a half-hour documentary film by Ariane Wu about the project's work in Stockton, CA, premiered in 2015. Youth Speaks director James Kass noted that "more and more young people are talking to each other through their poems." What would happen if youth poets were given access to the types of information CIR's investigative journalists unearth, and they could share that in the form of powerful spoken-word poetry? Young poets in Stockton, for instance, cited numbers provided by CIR in their readings: "California owes the people of Stockton \$31.5 million," read one line of poetry.

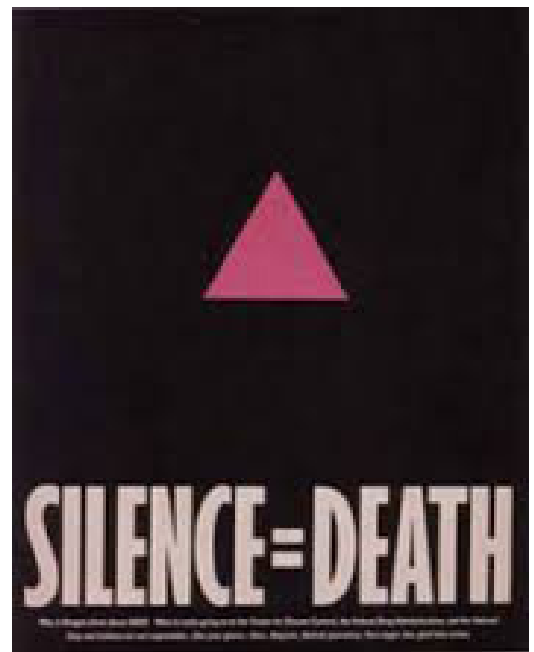
The project falls more under the heading of a social emergency than a temporary crisis, but the framework is applicable to many situations. For example, Deandre Evans, Will Hartfield and Donte Clark were three young poets in Richmond, CA, who accompanied reporter Amy Harris as she researched mismanagement of public housing in their community. The three resulting poems were **reported by local public television**. Here's an excerpt from William Hartfield-Peoples' poem:

I see barren hallways
Broken cameras
Uninvited guests
There's no service here
As if a sea of people were cast away on an island
to fend for themselves
The weather outside is frightening
The absent guards' ghost remains in its rightful place
A world ran by village rules
We exist only to survive
Accustomed to the law of the land
Mind your business
Pay no mind to that body that just fell
from the top floor the other night.



*Deandre Evans, Will Hartfield
and Donte Clark, OFF/PAGE poets*

A consistent through-line in reporting of emergencies is the feeling by many of those directly affected that their reality is misrepresented in conventional reporting by outsiders, who may treat them as statistics or categories rather than fully dimensional human beings. The Off/Site Project hints at many ways artistic



response can integrate art-making and other forms of information, braiding feeling and fact to create powerful portraits of communities surviving crisis.

OTHER POETRY AND NARRATIVE-BASED IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

POETS READING THE NEWS, subtitled “Journalism in Verse,” describes itself as “a newspaper that features investigative reports, multimedia dispatches, and global staff writers, but with content that is exclusively poetry and art.” Here’s a [selection of work about the December 2016 Ghost Ship fire](#) in Oakland, CA, which claimed the lives of 36, mostly artists, and triggered a communitywide dialogue about the housing crisis.

“TOGETHER WE ARE NEW YORK: ASIAN AMERICANS REMEMBER AND RE-VISION 9/11” is part of [Kavad](#), a project of Kundiman, a site dedicated to “the creation and cultivation of Asian American literature.” The project began with readings around the 10th anniversary of 9/11 and continued with a series of performances in New York and Washington, DC.

MUSIC

FIREROCK: PASS THE SPARK is a new musical theater production—its public premiere is scheduled for January 2018—that aims to catalyze “community engagement with climate change through the ancient practices of song and story.” This project of New Mexico-based Littlelobe, Inc., is conceived as a “scalable, open-source, DIY project that anyone can produce,” offering detailed instructions to groups around the U.S. who want to mount the musical to engage local communities and spark activism. You can read the story and hear some of the songs [here](#).

In a piece on the [Artists and Climate Change site](#), Molly Sturges, Littlelobe founding artistic director, described the process of developing the musical over a period of years:

Working with my collaborator, Luis Guerra, we birthed the beginnings of Firerock in New Mexico. Soon, a group of immensely committed collaborative artists and cultural workers came together to make the Firerock team. Over the past years, we have taken a deep dive together and have done our best to create something that would pierce what we call in Firerock, The Snooze, the thick slumber of disconnection from ourselves, each other, and our planet.

We set out to create something that would inspire a sense of possibility, and lead to sustained engagement and solutions. We have done this together and with hundreds of people from different communities through generative workshops. Firerock is a form of creative social evolution itself.

Music is certainly the United States’ most widespread and popular art form, which makes it a powerful vehicle for storytelling about disasters, emergencies, survival and resilience. For example, [Wikipedia](#) lists dozens of songs that were offered to generate contributions for rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina as well as many critical

of federal response to the flooding and civil emergency that followed. Music in the artistic response sphere mostly points at a crisis or its results. Even when it's created by a solo musician, music's capacity to engage and mobilize listeners multiplies its impact.

OTHER MUSIC-BASED IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

GARNER FAMILY SONGS: In 2016, Eric Garner's siblings, Elisha and Steven Flagg, released a song entitled "**I Can't Breathe**," echoing their brother's words captured on video moments before his death from an officer's chokehold. Those words became a rallying-cry in countless demonstrations and public events. It was the second Garner family song following Eric Garner's death. The earlier song, "**This Ends Today**," featured the original recording of Garner's last words.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER. The Latino rock band La Santa Cecilia made a music video for a cover of the Beatles' "Strawberry Fields Forever," highlighting the endangered lives of migrant workers who pick strawberries, a major crop in California's coastal and Central Valley towns. Strawberries use more dangerous fumigant pesticides than almost any other crop, with growers fighting and obtaining exemptions from a worldwide pesticide ban that has been in place for years.

I HEAR A VOICE: In the summer of 2016, students in the **Twin Cities Mobile Jazz Project** summer school program created a song in tribute to Philando Castile, who was killed by police just days before. The track weaves snippets of news soundtrack, spoken word, and choral singing with instrumental music.



DANCE

Sometimes artistic response takes the form of readiness: a pop-up willingness to stand in protest or support wherever the need arises. The loose network called **Dancing for Justice** describes its mission this way:

Dancing for Justice is dedicated to using dance as tools to bring awareness, action and change for the advancement of black lives in America. Our focus is deeply rooted in telling our stories. Through action, education, solidarity, and support of ALL Black communities and sharing of information,

Dancing for Justice provides:

- Creative methods in organizing and structuring large marches, innovative protest, sit-ins, etc.
- Story telling of our people and communities in hopes of allowing healing, sustainability, the mending of black communities closer together, and advocating for Black lives. #BlackLivesMatter!
- Tools for using our bodies and our movement as expression. These tools are the first and primary method for commenting and communicating on how injustices affect ourselves, and the communities we live in!

They've organized actions in Miami, New York, Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Tallahassee, and Washington, D.C. On December 13, 2014—just a week or so after spontaneous demonstrations had filled the streets when it was announced that the NYPD officer who was captured on video strangling Eric Garner to death on camera

would not be indicted—thousands of people converged on Washington to protest police violence. Tens of thousands marched in New York City’s Washington Square Park to One Police Plaza, billed as “Millions March NYC, A Day of Anger.”

On thINKing DANCE, the website of a Philadelphia-based consortium of “dance artists and writers who work together to provide critical coverage for dance, to build audiences for dance, and to foster the art of dance writing,” thINKing DANCE Executive Director Ellen Chenoweth and dancer/dance professor Gregory King offered “**When Dance Has a Voice,**” an account in two voices of the Dancing for Justice’s Philadelphia action on December 13. Here are the opening paragraphs, King’s voice is flush left, Chenoweth’s flush right:

On December 13th, I stood next to a white person dancing next to a black person in protest of the grand jury’s decision not to indict Officer Daniel Pantaleo in the killing of Eric Garner. I saw no discomfort, only dialogue. Dressed in black, red, and white, dancers moved together demanding justice for Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Akai Gurley, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, and so many others.

It was a cold and clear December afternoon, but not too cold. We marched up to City Hall, traveling north on the thoroughfare of Broad Street. 150 people of various races gathered at Headlong; many were dancers or affiliated with the dance community.

Dancer Lela Aisha Jones was lead organizer for the event. She rehearsed the assembled dancers for their role in the demonstration, as described by Chenoweth and King:

To say we marched is not accurate. We traveled as much as possible in a sequence of steps: 8 counts with our hands up, 8 counts holding parts of the body as if wounded, 8 counts hunched over with our hands behind our backs, the final 8 counts bringing our hands to our chests.

A dirge is a song of grief intended to accompany a funeral, and as we mourned the lives of people of color who have been gunned down senselessly, we stepped from side to side with hands raised above our heads. The music guided us as our hands made contact with our bodies until they were behind our backs. This unison action physicalized the despair of seeing innocent lives disregarded. On the downbeat of the drums that accompanied us the entire length of the march, we moved our hands from our chests defiantly, sending the energy towards the heavens. These 32 counts were repeated on and off from Federal Street to City Hall.

Other elements of the action included a “die-in,” where dancers laid down in mourning and protest for seven minutes, the length of time Eric Garner was choked to death; and forming into three concentric circles, calling out the names of seventy who lost their lives to police violence, and repeating after each name: “Your life matters, rest in peace!”

Near the end of their essay, Chenoweth and King assert the special role of dance in protest:

Dancers are natural leaders for any kind of social movement.

We know about healing and ritual. We know how to move together.

We know how to work with very little, how to create something out of nothing.
As we continue to respond to the ongoing national tragedy of institutional racism
and state-sanctioned killing—dance can make a powerful contribution.

Dance entertains but dance also mirrors the imbalances in society.

Politics danced as we organized our bodies to encircle freedom.

Freedom danced as we worked to change the landscape of
hate.

Moving within a movement, our choreographed bodies broke
through the restrictions of tyranny as we boldly cried out for
justice.

The power of the moving body can serve as a vehicle for social
change.

Change that uses differences to highlight commonality.

We danced for justice. We danced for equality.

We danced for our ancestors and our children.



Dancing for Justice shows how embodied artistic expression has the
power to convey multiple levels: ideas, feelings, statements. It shows how simple
artistic gestures can be taught and deployed quickly when people are compelled to
stand up for justice. Here's a **video** showing the movements taught for this event.

OTHER DANCE-BASED IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

Dance Theatre Etcetera (DTE) is based in the waterfront community of Red Hook, Brooklyn, anchoring there through site-specific work engaging both professional dancers and community members, and initiatives such as spearheading the creation of Red Hook Partners, a group of local service providers, business representatives, neighborhood residents and waterfront organizations focusing on community development. The Red Hook Coalition formed after Superstorm Sandy to assist in local recovery efforts; DTE is a founding member. Having established a tradition of site-specific performance in Red Hook—such as “**Angels and Accordions**,” performed for seven consecutive years in Green-Wood Cemetery—DTE had built a base for post-Sandy artistic response, such as the one-year anniversary “Dance on the Greenway,” which combined a festival of site-specific dances created by five diverse choreographers and a panel discussion on “‘Rethinking Red Hook: Pushing Towards a Sustainable Future’ with waterfront stakeholders and urban planners focusing on efforts underway and planned to create a more resilient and sustainable Red Hook waterfront as it faces future climate change related events.”

In her *GIA Reader* article on “**Creative Recovery and Cultural Resiliency**,” Caron Atlas describes DTE’s work in the immediate aftermath of Sandy and beyond:

Dance Theatre Etcetera (DTE) has a long history in Red Hook, a community hard hit by Sandy. Led by Martha Bowers, they have worked in all the neighborhood schools and organize the annual Red Hook Fest in collaboration with diverse community partners. DTE’s second-floor office

escaped damage from the storm, so they provided space for community organizations, Occupy Sandy, and political leaders; functioned as an information hub; and joined cleanup efforts in the neighborhood. When DTE learned that the Brooklyn Community Foundation was seeking collaborative proposals from neighborhoods affected by the storm with a very short window of opportunity, it reached out to its robust network and helped coordinate a successful proposal for the Red Hook Coalition, including Added Value, Red Hook Initiative, and Good Shepherd Services. The \$100,000 raised supported the small businesses that are an essential part of the community fabric and that were about to go under as a result of storm damage and lost business, as well as supported ongoing resiliency planning. Additionally, DTE applied directly to the Brooklyn Community Foundation and received a \$10,000 Sandy Relief grant that was used to pay two lead members of the Red Hook Volunteers (an outgrowth of Occupy Sandy efforts) who had quit their jobs to do relief work. They were able to continue spearheading data collection on affected households and coordinate thousands of volunteers.

THEATER

When artists are anchored in a community—committed to living and working there long-term, and thus part of what people commonly see as that community's social and cultural fabric—the arrival of disaster calls for an even higher level of engagement, care, and service. And so it was with *Flood Stories, Too*, **The Bloomsburg Theater Ensemble's** (BTE) 2013 play telling the story of the flood of 2011 in community members' own voices.

On September 9, 2011, Tropical Storm Lee brought Pennsylvania's Susquehanna River to a record high of over 33 feet as it flowed through Bloomsburg, a town of about 15,000 in Eastern Pennsylvania, home to Bloomsburg University, a state college. There were certain emblematic moments: for example, headlines announced that the county fair was canceled for the first time in 157 years because the fairgrounds were underwater for much of the flood, greatly damaging the facilities. Walking through Bloomsburg when *Flood Stories, Too* premiered in 2013, a visitor could see lingering evidence of the flood everywhere. Once-elegant homes lining the riverfront were now abandoned and uninhabitable, a layer of ghost-houses serving as a reminder that the river had changed Bloomsburg's face forever.

And not for the first time. For the town's older inhabitants, it was the third major flood in living memory: 1972, 2006, and 2011. BTE was around for two of them. According to its website, BTE had been founded "in 1978 by recent graduates of Northwestern University, who relocated to Bloomsburg for two years of master classes with legendary acting teacher Alvina Krause (1893-1981). Under Krause's inspiration, we established a resident ensemble of actors, directors, writers, and teachers who are empowered to articulate the theatre's mission and determine its artistic programming. Our goal was for a theatre that would, in Krause's words, be 'as important to its community as schools and churches.' Over the years there have been 37 members; of the current seven, three of us are from the founding years."

As the title suggests, *Flood Stories, Too* was a sequel: an earlier *Flood Stories* had been created to mark the flood of 2006, which established a record, surpassed in 2011. The production was a collaboration between BTE, the Bloomsburg University Players, and the Bloomsburg Bicentennial Choir. The script was based on hundreds of stories gathered from local residents via interviews and Story Circles; it incorporated original songs by Van Wagner and Paul Loomis. The staging resembled a church: seventy performers—children to elders, including some who'd lost their homes to the flood and many who'd taken part in cleanup efforts—were arrayed onstage on risers, the back rows of folding chairs holding Choir members, the other performers filling the front rows. Playwright Gerald Stropnick, an emeritus BTE member, described the ultra-open casting philosophy: “a terrific cast of community volunteer actors joined the effort; the door was open to any and all willing to participate. No auditions, and no one would be turned away.” The box-office policy mirrored the casting: admission was on a pay-as-you-wish basis.



Bloomsburg Fairgrounds after the flood

Stropnick stated the play's intentions in terms that had a lot to do with strengthening social fabric: “*Flood Stories, Too* will be a time for our communities to come together in recognition of nature's awesome power, and to celebrate the generosity of friends and strangers.” Balancing those desires with the inseparability of natural and civil disaster and the resulting implications for the Bloomsburg community, the play also drew out the human implications of a succession of record-breaking floods. Here's a small script excerpt:

TWO: Think about it. This community has built itself a flood environment. In 1969 that cloverleaf was built to take Route 42 out to Buckhorn. That cloverleaf changed how that creek looked. If you stood in the creek and looked down, you have this overpass that the creek has to go through, and concrete on both sides of that, so now you have a dam with a narrow hole in it. It wasn't a close call anymore.

THREE: And since then anything built upstream, Bloomsburg, Buckhorn, up the river or up the creek, new buildings, obstructions, asphalt, enough construction that the next time you get a significant weather pattern, you're going to be swimming in it.

ONE: The weather patterns are changing with climate change, bringing huge volumes of water our way. It has no place else to go.

TWO: Wilkes-Barre raised floodwalls,

THREE: We got the Mall and Walmart, acres of asphalt parking lots upstream.

ONE: No absorption anymore, now that increases the velocity of the water.

TWO: It had to hit us sooner or later.

These are difficult questions to talk about in community. Discussion easily polarizes into a ping-pong match—“jobs versus environment,” for instance—instead of a collective exploration into possible actions that value both. Yet if people want to have any say in the story that shapes their communities, these conversations are

essential. A company like BTE, woven into community fabric, is well-positioned to help people find a way to engage challenging questions despite the difficulties.

The script makes it clear that the full reality of a rare experience only emerges through multiple human stories, face-to-face experiences of actual existing human beings encountering the worst. One character in *Flood Stories Too* has helped many people sort out their lives after the flood, but it isn't until she experiences one survivor's full-scale meltdown that she fully understands what is at stake.

"I was looking at the data," she says. "I was looking at the forms and the facts and the figures. I had not understood, not really, until that moment, I had not understood the emotional wreckage of people in the flood, how every single moment could bring fresh grief."

Who is best-positioned to elicit, compile, and hold the integrity of such stories? That is a key question in artistic response.

OTHER THEATER-BASED IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

FACING OUR TRUTH: TEN-MINUTE PLAYS ON TRAYVON, RACE AND PRIVILEGE was inspired by the death of 17 year-old Trayvon Martin in 2012 at the hands of a neighborhood watch volunteer. The project was initiated in 2013 by Keith Josef Adkins, artistic director of The New Black Fest. Following the killing of Michael Brown, **HANDS UP: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testaments**, a second project was commissioned. Both have been presented at many theaters across the US. The online theater commons **HowlRound** offers a description by Adkins and excerpts from the *HANDS UP* short play.

EVERY 28 HOURS: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EVENTS IN FERGUSON MISSOURI, AND BLACK LIVES IN AMERICA was a collaboration between the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and The One-Minute Play Festival to create 90 ultra-short plays inspired by the statistic that every 28 hours in the U.S., a black person is killed by police. Beginning with a week-long October 2015 gathering of artists in Ferguson to generate the plays (**The Ferguson Moment** blog describes the entire process) and initial performance in St. Louis, the project has gone on to nationwide production.

MEDIA AND PHOTOGRAPHY

For those on the ground when it unfolds, a crisis has vivid, multi-layered meanings: fear for oneself spikes and the desire to care for others often rises with it: the shock and pain of firsthand suffering, the desire that this reality be known by others who should understand and respond. But too often, the direct experience of survivors is distorted, elided, or ignored in mass-media depictions. Some artistic response builds individual and collective capacity to document and disseminate the full story.

FERGUSON VOICES: DISRUPTING THE FRAME, an interactive photo exhibit, debuted in January 2017 at the University of Dayton. The traveling exhibit features photos augmented with interview audio and text from people directly affected

by the 2014 protests in Ferguson, MO, following the killing by police of Michael Brown. The students who captured this material in May 2016 were trained via the **Moral Courage Project**, an oral history collaboration between PROOF, a New York-based nonprofit that “that uses visual storytelling and education to inspire global attitude and policy changes,” and the Dayton University Human Rights Center and the College of Arts and Sciences’ human rights studies program.

PROOF has done quite a bit of work in international conflict zones such as Bosnia, Rwanda, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka. In the Moral Courage Project, PROOF trains teams of students and faculty on the ethics and methodology of collecting witness testimony. They collect interviews, photographs, and other materials documenting instances of moral courage in post-conflict settings. Records are preserved in an accessible archive at the Human Rights Center and made available to students, researchers, and advocacy organizations.

Journalist and human rights activist Jimmie Briggs, who spent part of his youth in Ferguson, is the Moral Courage Project’s co-coordinator. He told the **Dayton City Paper**,

In the two years since Michael Brown was killed, I think the name “Ferguson” has really come to invoke a cautionary tale of what communities don’t want to become, in the case of racial tensions around fatal police encounters. I think the narrative has lost this idea of who Ferguson really is, and who lives here. I think the students coming down, Joel [Pruce, assistant professor of human rights studies at the University of Dayton] coming down, Leora [Kahn, PROOF founder and director] coming in, me being here, I think it just really made all of us, including the people we were engaging with... folks found that the community is much more than what it’s been portrayed to be in the national media.

“Ferguson Voices” shows that with training and clear ethical standards, students and others can engage community members after the initial emergency in building a much more accurate and full picture of their experience, helping to repair an inadequate or distorting mass-media portrayal. This is not immediate artistic response, but part of the ongoing process of nurturing resilience and sharing the truths that support community.

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY AND MEDIA IDEAS THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

DOCUMENTING FERGUSON: This is a crowd-sourced, open-access archive of digital media—images, video, audio, and stories from both community-based and mass-media sources—maintained and made freely available to the public by Washington University in St. Louis.

ALIVE IN TRUTH was an all-volunteer project to record life histories of people from the New Orleans region who were affected “by Hurricane Katrina and the federal floods created by levee failure. Our mission is to document individual lives, restore community bonds, and to uphold the voices, culture, rights, and history of New Orleanians.” It was founded by Austin, TX-based writer, social justice activist, and educator Abe Louise Young, working with a large team of interviewers who captured stories. Each story link takes the visitor to a complete transcript with images.

THE LOWER NINTH WARD LIVING MUSEUM continues a history of small house museums in New Orleans. Its website says the admission-free Museum “was created to celebrate the rich history of this unique neighborhood. Only one in five residents have been able to return to their homes, so many stories will be lost if we as a community fail to actively remember. The Living Museum features oral histories from community members, exhibits of key events from the history of the Lower Ninth Ward, and cultural events that entertain and educate.” In addition to its collections, the Museum serves as a neighborhood cultural center, hosting classes and clubs mostly for young people, as well as talks and events for adults.

THE BDOYE MEMORY MAP, a website featuring sites and stories of Dakota people south and west of the Twin Cities, was created by Minneapolis artist Mona Smith and collaborators began as part of a 2005 “City Indians” multimedia installation at Ancient Traders Gallery in Minneapolis. It shares stories of a people whose history was ignored or erased as part of the long-term social emergency of Indigenous people in North America, documenting and building resilience.

INDIVIDUAL ART-MAKING

Most artistic response focuses on the ways that artists rise to offer their gifts to communities in crisis. In that frame, the artists are there to serve. But many emergencies also have a significant impact on artists themselves: their homes, workspaces, their often-fragile artworks, manuscripts, and the other means and products of their work. What is artistic response that emerges from a sense of a community of artists?

Come Together: Surviving Sandy is a website documenting several related arts offerings—an exhibit, performances, readings—at Brooklyn’s Industry City (a somewhat controversial development in the Sunset Park neighborhood) in the fall of 2013, a year after the storm. The Dedalus Foundation, established by artist Robert Motherwell, had moved into the Industry City facility not long before Sandy hit. Jack Flam, an art scholar and critic who serves as President and CEO of Dedalus, explains how the project came to be organized:

New York’s artist community was especially hard hit. Many artists had studios in low-lying areas in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens, which were flooded or lost power for extended periods of time. A number of art galleries and storage facilities were also damaged. In several instances, artists lost much of their life’s work.

The storm was devastating, but the response to the devastation generated an enhanced sense of community. On the most direct and personal level, the friends and colleagues of individual artists came to help them clean up and try to salvage works and materials; and those friends were often joined by their friends, and even by strangers, which created a radiating network of assistance. Another important source of help came from a number of foundations and government agencies that provided financial aid to artists, and in some cases found them temporary studio spaces....

Our plan was to start with an exhibition in June 2013 of works by the winners of scholarships that Dedalus gives to graduating seniors in New

York City public high schools, and to follow up with a larger, more general exhibition a few months later, during the following fall.

Given the enormous effect that Sandy had on so many New York artists, and the admirable pluck that the artistic community had shown in the face of the adversity created by the storm, we decided to devote our first large exhibition at Industry City to a commemoration of the first anniversary of Hurricane Sandy—a kind of coming together of artists who work in different mediums, which would emphasize the courage and resiliency of the New York art community.

Artist and writer Phong Bui, publisher of the *Brooklyn Rail*, accepted the role of curator. He was no stranger to crisis:

When I was growing up in Hue, Vietnam, in the late 1960s and 1970s, two primordial forces of destruction colored my life. The first force was man. Just as it did the country, the war divided members of my family—after the Geneva Conference in May 1954, one-half went to the north, the other half remained in the south. The second force was nature. Because of Vietnam’s tropical wet climate, monsoons constantly flooded the land. (I remember on one occasion our family stayed on the second floor of our house for two weeks; after another storm, my siblings and I went to school by boat.) Since then, I’ve seen many reminders of man’s potential for destruction. Endless conflicts have afflicted the world since my departure from the old country and arrival in the US in 1980. But my memories of the potency of nature lay dormant until “Superstorm Sandy” abruptly rekindled them in October 2012.

The visual art exhibit included works by artists who’d been directly affected, and also work by others who had not been personally harmed by the storm but wanted to express solidarity. Choreographers, dancers, musicians, poets, and writers were invited to participate, staging a series of performances and readings in the exhibition spaces during the run of the show. Oral history interviews of affected artists were collected. Among the many unusual features of the project was the fact that extremely well-known and unknown artists were presented side-by-side in its inclusive frame. As Flam put it in the website’s introductory essay, “It conveyed the sense that here, at last, was a real, unfiltered cross-section of the dynamism and variety of the actual New York art world.”

Within the huge exhibition space and large conceptual frame of the project, there were smaller focal projects. For example, for “The Beauty of Friends,”

[O]ne hundred artists, the majority of whom had been affected by the storm, were invited to submit a single, self-selected work. Each artist was then instructed to invite a friend, doubling the total count of participants. If a chosen artist was not directly affected by Sandy, he or she had to find a partner with a Sandy story, and vice versa.

“Come Together” is much more an artifact of the art world than most of the community-based and social justice-oriented projects featured in this *Guide*. But in recognizing the art world as a traumatized community, it echoes some of their aims. In her essay on “The Beauty of Friends,” Sara Christoph wrote that

It is not often that you find instances of extreme democracy in the art world; rarely does establishing connections with other people—specifically with those different from you—ever seem to be the goal of an exhibition. But here, in this show, it was about nothing else. It was about people, the relationships they form, and the things they make in response to this inexplicable life. It was about solidarity actualized through art.

Twenty poets were commissioned to write poems relating to the experience of Hurricane Sandy, and their work was performed in the exhibition space and published as a chapbook entitled *Oh, Sandy: A Remembrance*. You can find sound recordings of some of the poems [here](#). The following is an excerpt by Bob Holman, Minister of Poetry and Language Protection on the USDAC National Cabinet:

As the waters rise and rising keep on
Coming closer and then topping as winds
Swirl and the concoction pulls the children
Out of your arms and into the whale of air
The sky can break in your basement, the burglar
Alarm is not taking any more messages. Sweet
Pacific of Atlantic, the siren song salsas into
Your Lover's arms. You will rise again, Brooklyn.

Phong Bui's long essay describing the development of this project contains a statement that encapsulates its communal, celebratory spirit, carrying the message that flavors so many post-emergency celebrations: *we survived!* "Artists," he wrote, "more than most, understand the relentless struggle required to sustain a rhythm of work over a lifetime. And they also understand the lightness of spirit they gain as a reward. In times as unnatural as natural disasters, that lightness of spirit comes from the artist's community, as the words that curl around the logo's outer edge indicate: 'Come Together.'"

OTHER IDEAS FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS' WORK THAT COULD BE REPLICATED OR ADAPTED FOR ARTISTIC RESPONSE PROJECTS:

VIRAL: 25 YEARS FROM RODNEY KING is "an immersive multimedia exhibition featuring artists' responses to police brutality through the past quarter century." It's a project of California-based Art Responders: Cultural Engagement for Social Justice, providing workshops, exhibits, and other art-based events and educational offerings.

JR'S ERIC GARNER'S EYES: In the December 2014 Millions March NYC protesting police violence, the demonstration was headed by people holding up eight photographic panels depicting the eyes of Eric Garner, killed by a police chokehold on Staten Island earlier that year, created by [the artist JR](#).

BLACK FUTURES MONTH POSTERS: For Black Futures Month, February 2016, Black Lives Matter featured a daily poster image by a different artist. Both the idea of an online gallery that calls attention to issues through images and the notion of unveiling a new work each day for a month are adaptable to artistic emergency response.

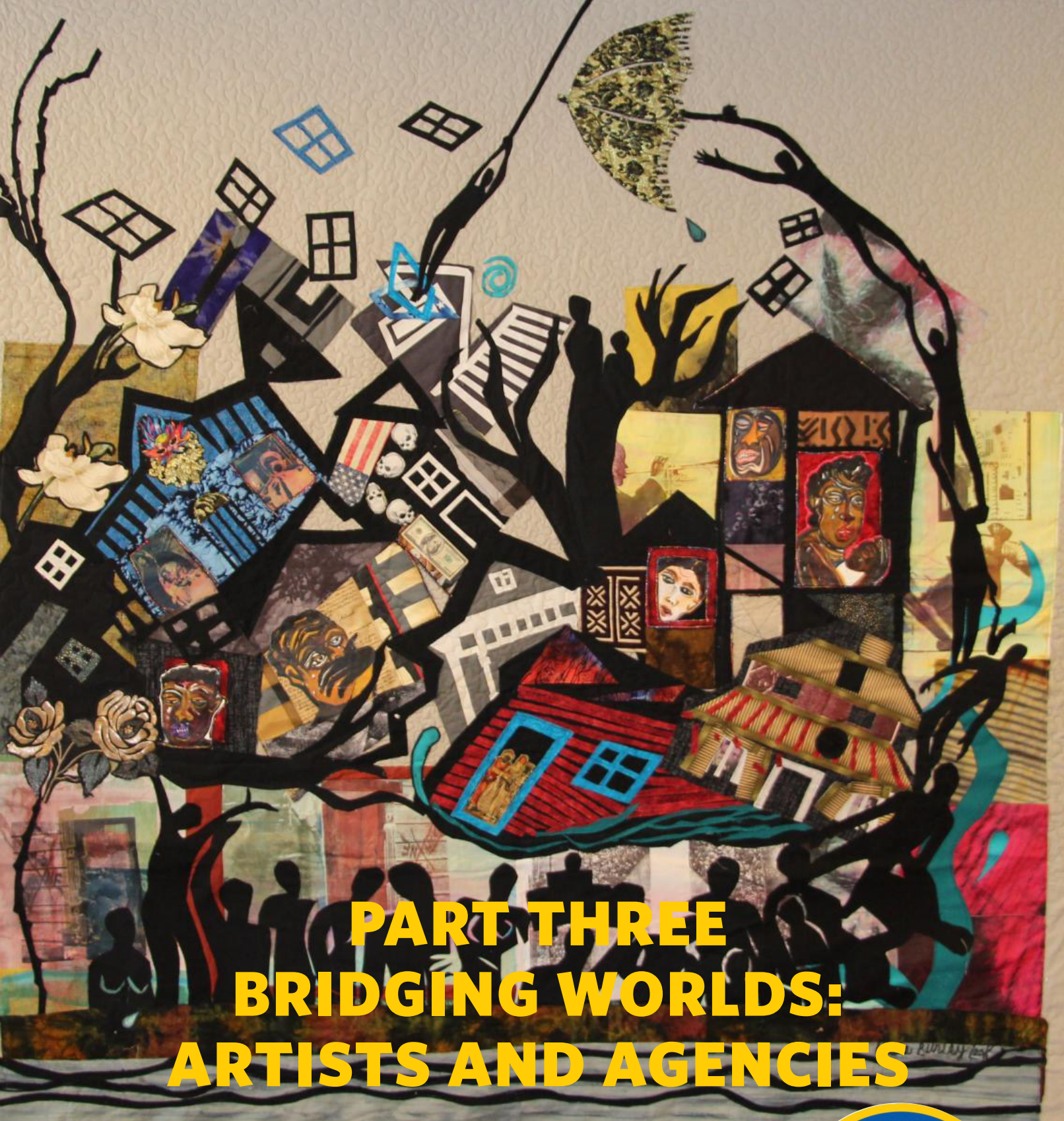
"WE ARE THE STORM" CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO: CultureStrike, collaborating with JustSeeds artists cooperative, created a portfolio of climate crisis

works generated through partnerships between artists and frontline environmental groups. “‘We Are The Storm’ Climate Change Portfolio’ draws inspiration from the powerful work of grassroots groups that are championing creative and community-based solutions to combat climate change, and resisting industrial fossil fuel projects, such as the Tar Sands projects, the Keystone pipeline, fracking operations, destructive mining practices, and the transporting and burning of toxic fuels. The featured artworks bring voices from frontline communities that are being the most impacted by climate change and destructive environmental practices, to the forefront of the climate change discussion.”

WHEN SHE RISES was an exhibition at Studio Grand in Oakland, CA, by three women artists—Cece Carpio, Nisha Sembi, and Erin Yoshi—examining the experience of women who have endured violence in the artists’ countries of origin: the Philippines, India, and Japan. Interactivity was built into the exhibit, for example with an altar set up inviting visitors to honor their ancestors, and other elements that enabled sharing of stories evoked by the art works. There’s a good description at the [Center for Asian American Media site](#).



by **Favianna Rodriguez**, Secretary of
Cultural Equity on the
USDAC National Cabinet.



PART THREE BRIDGING WORLDS: ARTISTS AND AGENCIES

**"KATRINA WRECKAGE AND TEARS ... AND STILL WE RISE" (2012) BY VIOLA
BURLEY LEAK, WASHINGTON, D.C. IN THE EXHIBIT : AND STILL WE RISE:
RACE, CULTURE AND VISUAL CONVERSATIONS," A NATIONAL TRAVELING
EXHIBIT ORGANIZED BY CINCINNATI MUSEUM CENTER, NATIONAL
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER, AND THE WOMEN OF COLOR
QUILTERS NETWORK. INFORMATION [HERE](#).**



IN HER ESSAY “SIX PRINCIPLES FOR ARTS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT,” USDAC National Cabinet Minister of Emergency Arts Amelia Brown names artists as intermediaries who can translate between communities and the agencies charged with emergency management. They can help to build relationship and collaboration in the context of crises, whether chronic stresses such as lead contamination in Detroit’s water or acute shocks such as Hurricane Sandy.

It is useful to think of artists as bridges between very different worlds. Functioning as bridge people between contrasting models of engagement is a familiar role to artists who work in education or social service settings or who facilitate community processes such as devised theater or participatory murals. They step out of their own preferred framework and as their partners to do the same, meeting at the center of a bridge built on understanding, negotiation, and compromise. Finding common ground with respect to intentions, processes, and outcomes is seldom easy, but if the partners are aligned, it’s a worthy and possible challenge. In a crisis, the challenge is going to be greater. Take a moment to consider the poles of engagement.

ARTISTS:

- Opportunity and action research focused: find a need and fill it, experimenting as you go
- Experiential, valuing feeling as much as other data as approaches evolve
- Focused on welcoming and honoring space for difficult feelings and conversations
- A range of partnership models, stressing reciprocity
- Accountable to community, partners, self, and (if applicable) funder or sponsor
- Assessing impact based on observation and experience, on participants’ subjective response

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES:

- Necessity and liability focused: response based on established “best practice”; avoid trying new things that may increase liability
- Protocol-based, following established processes
- Focused on efficiency, reduction of difficult feelings or friction
- Generally a lead partner with other partners adapting to requirements
- Accountable to public or private institutional and agency leadership, and often, elected officials
- Assessing impact through formal evaluation based on quantification and aggregate response

During a disaster, few individuals and organizations find themselves living at the farthest point on one of these poles. But they may stake out ground almost anywhere along this spectrum. The challenge is to forge common purpose and build a foundation of trust to support good working relationships. Both artists and agencies are bound by legal, cultural, and social obligations. Many factors can affect how they play out.

In an interview for this *Guide*, Kate Dinneen, a blacksmith who lives in Lawrence, Kansas, and works as CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) Coordinator and Duty Officer in Douglas County Emergency Management, pointed out how the nature of an emergency can impact agencies’ willingness to welcome artistic response:

In natural disasters, the first responders are heroes; in civil disobedience, the first responders are not. A lot of firefighters would not respond in the case of civil disobedience, because they can't protect themselves. So then it would just be law enforcement there. So it's a completely different animal, in how you respond to that. You just have to take that into consideration. As an artist, if you were to go in to something like that, the amount of respect that you would have to give—if you wanted to be able to say something, and not get squished—is much higher. You'd have to maintain a much more level head. And be very calm and specific about what you were doing. And respectful.

Some people who'd attempted artistic response in hard-hit major population centers where bureaucracy is thicker and sensitivity to liability much more pronounced told the USDAC they'd found it very difficult to convince agencies that artistic response could be a trustworthy ally. As one person who'd had that experience put it, formal emergency management tends to be highly systematized, something that makes sense in many ways. For example, without protocols that mandate a consistent level of service, disaster response provision will likely be much more comfortable in a prosperous community than in an economically stressed one. By definition, artistic response asks a tightly bounded system to innovate; the existing rules don't cover it. And from an agency perspective, as one artist put it, in an emergency “you can break rules but you can't plan to break rules.”

Kate doubted that concern would be quite as challenging in smaller communities as it may be in big cities.

I teach a course for our citizens on Community Emergency Response Teams. One thing that always comes up is if a huge tornado hit, or another Katrina-like thing happened, and you were going through your neighborhood trying to help your own neighbors, there's something called the Good Samaritan law. If you're doing something with your best interest at heart to the best of your ability, and something goes wrong, you can't be sued for it, because you were doing the best that you could. Always the first thing that we do with our emergency response team members is start out by saying, “here's the protocol, this is what's going to happen, and we need you to sign this waiver, so that we know that you understand what we've just said to you.” But here in the center of the country, you take care of each other.

Even in highly systematized urban disaster-management situations, official agencies may be more willing to enter into relationship with a nonprofit organization—where the organization accepts a liability waiver and takes on that responsibility—than with individuals or loose coalitions.

Artists and groups can also join or borrow from the **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** framework. Caron Atlas explains:

The good things about systematizing are you can plan for equity and you can plan ahead, trying to think of how you structure something in a way that doesn't lose the spontaneous engagement that can happen. A lot of cities have emergency response teams that are neighborhood-based volunteers. When the city thinks of emergency response on a big scale they think “Who do we

call?” They want one person or three: here they want to call the Department of Cultural Affairs and the DCA calls one person per borough. What about creating a corps of artists who want to do this, who sign up and get trained in basic emergency stuff? But it’s also important not to lose the neighborhood stepping up, where people are empowered. The CERT model of working with neighborhood people really applies. I’d like to see a very concrete proposal on this: what we want to implement in the way of systematic artistic response and what it would cost.

You could do this at the community level too. You’d have community hub organizations that are responsible for people who are interested in getting involved after an emergency, if it’s a blackout or an explosion in the neighborhood or something bigger. The city would have a database of them and they’d get some training, because agencies are worried about just the random volunteer coming in without a structured mechanism. So let’s say you give everyone an afternoon training, then you have at least a core group of trained people. A main concern is around children, but there are already all these teaching artists that are accredited to work in schools, that could be enough.

As an AmeriCorps alum, Amelia Brown noted that she receives periodic invitations to join a cohort helping out in a particular situation.

I was in AmeriCorps. You make a commitment to be of service to your country, not only the year that you’re in AmeriCorps, but every year after. AmeriCorps is always sending opportunities to serve to alumni. One of the opportunities they sent to me was to go down for one week to the agency that I ended up in a working relationship of over ten years. Alumni have already been trained as AmeriCorps members to go and work in a disaster, a chaotic environment. We had our own AmeriCorps training, and of course we received specific training on specific jobs once we arrived. Having the partnership and the structure and the foundational network, I think that helped a lot.

Similarly, there are organizations that train people to know their rights, understand the system of arrest and prosecution, and prepare for interaction with police in the context of protests. The Philadelphia-based **Up Against The Law Legal Collective** offers an excellent selection of written and video-based training materials. Nationally, the **Organizing for Power, Organizing for Change website** lists a wide range of trainings for protest and beyond.

OFFICIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Most people who have partnered with official emergency management agencies advise artists to get involved in the system—learn the rules, take a workshop, get a volunteer certification—both for one’s own preparation and to open doors to artistic engagement with agencies, as noted earlier. This is from Kate Dinneen:

If you’re going to go in in the early days of an emergency, you really should understand how the first responders are responding. You should understand ICS

(the Incident Command System) and NIMS (the National Incident Management System). You can do a lot of that stuff online. There's ICS Level 100 which just explains the basic principles. It would be good to know that, if you're going to be there, just so that when you're talking to those people who are doing their job as first responders, they might get cranky, or they might want to know what's going on, and you have the language. You can say, 'hey, I'm here to do this thing, and I'm involved with this group,' or whatever. The more you know about what's happening there—it's kind of a respect thing to the people who are there, and that way you get more respect for yourself.

If you want to move about in the territory, in other words, learn the lingo—an approach that makes sense for anyone who wishes to partner with official emergency management agencies. As Kate pointed out, there are easy-access basic offerings as a starting place, and if you want to understand the massive and elaborately complex official framework for the entire national system, FEMA makes those documents available too. Just glancing at them makes clear the challenges inherent in creating a system that serves a large and diverse nation—urban centers to rural areas—especially if the aim is to centralize control. And that clarifies some of the reasons why it can be difficult to engage agencies in things that seem experimental, open-ended, or just unorthodox.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** information and connects people to training opportunities across the country, saying it “educates individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.”

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute offers a range of **Incident Command System resources** that provide both an overview and detail of the systems and protocols to be used in an emergency.

FEMA also offers a range of **basic to advanced ICS training courses** that can be completed online or on the campus of a nearby educational institution. There's also **a huge course catalog** for first responders, with hundreds of specific offerings.

If you'd like to learn more about the national emergency management system, documents providing exhaustive detail can be downloaded from the **National Response Framework page of the FEMA website**. The **full 2016 Framework** includes no mention of art or culture. For a quick overview, you can find a three-page summary **here**.

For a shorter route to first response, Kate Dinneen suggests finding an inroad via an organization already set up to assist survivors of disaster:

To make it easier to get in the door so that the artist didn't have to go through all of the NIMS protocol—how you do incident command and all that stuff—though it's good to know the outline of that, just so you know how everybody's working—an approach might be to talk with the mental health responders. For the emergency responders, the immediate issue is getting everybody shelter, getting them food, getting everybody safe. And then there's the rebuilding of it.

And the issue that we as artists have in the everyday world of getting respect and all the rest of that we keep fighting for—funding, whatever, especially here in Kansas—is magnified in a disaster situation. So you know, it's like, “well, you're just playing with crayons.” That's kind of the go-to thing that people do. But if you were involved with mental health somehow, and saying, “hey, this is a really good way to help people get back on their feet, to work stuff out.” It's a wonderful way to do it.

What guides official emergency management? The stated principles of emergency management appear in the 2008 statement on the next page.

From a FEMA insider perspective, there's debate about how these principles play out in practice. In a 2007 paper (“**Issues, Principles and Attitudes - Oh My! Examining Perceptions from Select Academics, Practitioners And Consultants on the Subject of Emergency Management**”), quite a few FEMA-related interviewees noted that the advent and expansion of Homeland Security had blurred the lines between disasters and terrorist events. For instance, “[S]ecurity driven risks need a different set of management practices. Unfortunately many of the same community responses work for both scenarios [natural disasters and terrorist incidents] and therefore I believe there has been misunderstanding that general management practices are also interchangeable and, more unfortunately, that a ‘protect us from the enemy’ attitude is equally applicable to the risks we generate in our own communities.” Another interviewee put it this way: “As law enforcement pushed FEMA and natural hazards planning further and further to the back of the room, it was clear to emergency managers that there would come a day of reckoning...and that was Katrina. Unfortunately, the leadership at Homeland Security has the single tool syndrome: I have a hammer so every problem is a nail.”

From the perspective of many communities affected by major disasters, the key stated principles are often breached, so skepticism is high. There are masses of commentary online about the ways government failed New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina. For instance, [this French site](#), critical of the mainstream press, assembled a compilation of articles documenting the ways FEMA and other public agencies prevented aid from reaching New Orleans in the interest of controlling access. [A transcript of New Orleans' then-mayor, Aaron Broussard, on “Meet The Press”](#) is typically heartbreaking. Among other things, Broussard said:

We have been abandoned by our own country. Hurricane Katrina will go down in history as one of the worst storms ever to hit an American coast. But the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina will go down as one of the worst abandonments of Americans on American soil ever in U.S. history. ... Whoever is at the top of this totem pole, that totem pole needs to be chainsawed off and we've got to start with some new leadership. It's not just Katrina that caused all these deaths in New Orleans here. Bureaucracy has committed murder here in the greater New Orleans area and bureaucracy has to stand trial before Congress now.

There is considerable agreement that FEMA's capacity and performance improved significantly between Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy—for survivors,

Emergency Management

Definition, Vision, Mission, Principles

Definition

Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.

Vision

Emergency management seeks to promote safer, less vulnerable communities with the capacity to cope with hazards and disasters.

Mission

Emergency Management protects communities by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made disasters.

Principles

Emergency Management must be:

1. **Comprehensive** — emergency managers consider and take into account all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to disasters.
2. **Progressive** — emergency managers anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.
3. **Risk-Driven** — emergency managers use sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.
4. **Integrated** — emergency managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of a community.
5. **Collaborative** — emergency managers create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.
6. **Coordinated** — emergency managers synchronize the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose.
7. **Flexible** — emergency managers use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.
8. **Professional** — emergency managers value a science and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement.



FEMA



circumstances were far better, albeit still far from perfect. As public perception of official emergency management has moved from 2005's all-time low to become more positive, more opportunity may open for artists to build good working relationships with agencies.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RELIEF FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

The description of **"Come Together: Surviving Sandy"** in the previous section of this *Guide* is just one example of how artists are directly affected by crises. They sometimes need help rather than being in a position to offer it. In recent years, more and more resources have been created to assist artists in such situations.

Grantmakers in the Arts has compiled **a list of links**. First among them is the **National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness and Emergency Response 2014-2020 plan**, calling for "an official entity to support the emerging field of arts emergency management" and positioning itself as evolving into that entity. Similarly, **CERF+** (subtitled "The Artists Safety Net") has made a set of online resources available. The most widely available is **"Essential Guidelines for Arts Responders Organizing in the Aftermath of Disaster"** which gives fairly detailed advice for "arts responders"—organizations and services responding to the urgent needs of artists and organizations faced with disaster.

It's a little confusing to untangle who's who. It appears that the National Endowment for the Arts has been coordinating a national approach under its own umbrella. The NEA convened an April 2016 gathering attended mostly by heads of nonprofit organizations and public programs. Entitled **"Readiness and Resiliency: Advancing A Collaborative and National Strategy for the Arts in Times of Emergencies,"** it focused on three objectives:

- Brief key leaders on the state of emergency preparedness in the arts and cultural community;
- Determine how to advance more collaborative and comprehensive emergency strategies at the national and local levels for artists and arts and cultural organizations; and
- Provide a forum for the nation's arts and cultural leadership to develop, individually and collectively, their roles and responsibilities in readiness and response.

The meeting report is a compendium of bullet lists touching on both arts groups' readiness to face disaster, urging planning and preparation; and to a far lesser degree, integrating artistic response into emergency systems.

South Arts, one of six U.S. **Regional Arts Associations**, founded **ArtsReady**, "an online emergency preparedness service by and for arts/cultural nonprofits, [that] provides arts organizations with customized business continuity plans for post-crisis sustainability." A basic membership is free and premium memberships, allowing access to all the planning tools, cost \$300 for the first year, \$225 a year thereafter.

The newest development is the **Performing Arts Readiness project**, launched in January 2017 by a range of partners supported by funding from the Andrew W.

Mellon Foundation to offer education, grants, and technical assistance to performing arts organizations for emergency preparedness planning and networking.

Every community affected by crisis is home to artists as well as people who do other kinds of work. Special needs have drawn special attention: what if your archive of visual art or film/video is flooded? What if your theater has sustained significant damage? What if you had a studio but you can't go back until a great deal of repair work is done? All the resources for affected artists say it: planning and preparation now is a chief way to reduce vulnerability for a future disaster.

MAKING THE CASE: CAN YOU PROVE THAT?

One of the first questions emergency management and other official agencies and policymakers typically ask when confronted with artistic response projects is whether there is hard proof of their value.

This is a common challenge to the social value of collaborative and community-based arts work across the board, whether it takes place in a context of disaster, ongoing social emergency, or the ordinary doings of education, health, environmental, and social service systems.

Most institutional and bureaucratized systems strongly prefer quantifiable approaches to evaluation: standardized scales, numerical indices of impact, graphs and charts convey the perceived success or failure of a type of intervention—and along with it, in a numbers-enraptured society, the comforting sense that hard proof has been delivered, whether or not the numbers have been subjected to deep scrutiny.

This is problematic in several ways. Can art's value be fully portrayed with numbers? Can an effort to deliver creative consolation in an emergency be evaluated side-by-side with, say, an initiative to deliver food? Most artists say no, advocating for an approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative assessment, that prefers people's experience in their own voices to codification of that experience by those not directly involved. For people who have been on the ground in crisis situations, the wealth of direct observation and participant testimony to the value of the work almost always suffices to ratify the value proposition.

But there is a bridge of understanding to be crossed here: how do you convince officials whose work takes place in a structure of values and assumptions that support old-style research (where expert observers at a distance review and draw conclusions from others' experience). For them, how can what seem like "softer" ways of assessing value hold real power and meaning?

One of the starkest aspects of this challenge is that the demand to prove value in a particular way often functions more as a way to reduce pressure on gatekeepers than to extract real and useful knowledge. Not having to consider new approaches unless they come packaged in old frameworks drastically decreases the time officials must put into assessing them. In most systems, there's a default setting that accepts the way things have previously been done as a benchmark, so that conventional approaches are not as closely examined as are potential innovations.

Even when existing approaches are widely perceived to fail, there's a comfortable familiarity in failing in the way "everybody knows it's done," and a much bigger perceived risk in experimenting, which carries the possibility of fresh failure just as much as fresh success.

For some, under current circumstances, the obstacles to innovation are formidable enough that artists should learn and use official systems' preferred approaches to evaluation in the hope of convincing the powers-that-be of the validity of their work. Others have invested in creating and demonstrating new frameworks they hope will win converts. There is quite a bit of material that fits each description, for instance:

Animating Democracy has assembled a compendium of resources to aid in assessing social impact in more nuanced and accurate ways. For example, its "**Aesthetic Perspectives framework** explores 11 attributes that are understood to make arts for change work more effective.

The **June 2013 issue of *Public Art Review***, focusing on "The Art of Healing," includes relevant material on art in disaster with quotes from some of the projects featured in this *Guide*.

Artistic response is not art therapy *per se*. Though some art therapists are also artists, they typically study for their therapeutic work in schools of psychology or social work, obtaining degrees and credentials in those professional fields. But often the modalities they use are very close to those employed in artistic response: storytelling and other narrative approaches, working with drawings and other forms of image-creation, working with music, psychodrama, theater of witness, and other performance forms. That means some of the research into art therapy's effectiveness may be cited to support artistic response.

This 2010 compendium of art therapy outcome research published in *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association* mentions a huge range of research projects, summarizing their approaches and results. **Art Therapy** has also highlighted many papers and articles on the use of artistic modes in post-traumatic situations (search for the keyword "trauma" on the journal's home page to find hundreds of citations). **This 2007 research review** in *The Arts in Psychotherapy* is similar in scope and intentions, but focuses on traumatized children. Academic papers can also be an asset, for example, this master's thesis on "**Post-Disaster Group Art Therapy Treatment for Children**."

There is more international than domestic artistic response research available, much of it focusing on specific disaster regions.

Here's an evaluation of **Arts Queensland's Creative Recovery Pilot project**, focusing on artistic response to devastating floods in this Australian state in 2011; three-quarters of Queensland was designated a disaster zone due to the scope and intensity of the damage. The **Creative Recovery** section of PlaceStories, a project of the community arts organization Feral Arts, features video and other



*After flooding in Queensland, Australia, teens in Ipswich were asked to define resilience. Their responses were projected for the Writing's Off the Wall project, part of the Creative Recovery Program. Photo © Scotia Monkivitch from **Public Art Review**.*

documentation of artistic response and resilience projects from 2011 and beyond. Here's an **overview** of some of the growing number of Australian artistic response projects. ***Gauging the Impacts of Post-Disaster Arts and Culture Initiatives in Christchurch: A Literature Review***: This report from the Manatu Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage reviews findings from dozens of studies and reports touching on or relevant to the 2010 and 2011 Christchurch earthquakes that hundreds and destroyed homes and infrastructure.

On 1 May 2016, a wildfire started southeast of Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada and spread across 1.5 million acres. It was declared under control at the beginning of July. The arts council in the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo, which contains Fort McMurray, commissioned a research report—“**Creative resilience in Wood Buffalo: How the arts and culture can be a major contributor to local recovery and rebuilding**”—that covers both efforts to support the arts community and arts-based initiatives to support the larger community after the fire.

WHAT'S NEEDED?

As disasters multiply, the range and quantity of artistic response is growing. There is willingness, talent, compassion, and creativity to spare. But given the pace of need, there are definitely places in the cultural landscape requiring new frameworks, collective understanding, and support. The following are key needs.

COLLABORATION. We need to work together, says Amelia Brown, forming a coordinated network:

We can get a level of infrastructure and systems reliability from emergency managers; creativity, innovation, and engagement from the artists; and healing practices from professionals in art therapy and related fields. The partnerships would need to be built, owned, and validated by the agencies we are proposing to work with across sectors. This is a way to model ourselves where we would like to see the field develop in the future.

Just like there's a translator and an interpreter that has to be present between somebody who speaks Spanish and someone who speaks English, I think there needs to be a dedicated expert in translating and understanding both systems, the artist ecosystem and the artist language—even the specific artist language and ecosystem within New York City, which could be different in Minnesota. It's not just about the language and understanding the systems, it's also about having strong, deep, and trusting relationships on all sides. We need to have an individual or teams who are embedded and understand the system of whatever agency they're working with, whether it's government or disaster relief or local volunteer agencies that work for disaster relief purposes. Without that, it's going to be a long road. A really, really long road.

Few of the projects described here arose from a conscious collaboration between those charged with official emergency response and artists. The work Arts & Democracy coordinated after superstorm Sandy at the Park Slope Armory is a notable exception. How will such collaborations become more the rule?

FUNDING is certainly a problem. So far, the funding of artistic response is situational and sporadic. Where influential intermediaries have advocated for this work—which is generally where the crisis is of a scale or intensity that seizes and holds national attention—resources have been more available. But not necessarily for artistic response per se.

About six months after Superstorm Sandy, Arts & Democracy convened a group conversation with artists who'd been involved in post-Hurricane Katrina artistic response. Describing it, Caron Atlas contrasted the relatively significant funds that went to New Orleans and the funding made available in New York:

Funding in New Orleans—I think a lot had to do with NPN's (National Performance Network) role as an intermediary. They were able to take advantage of funder interest and help funders see that funding this kind of work in arts and culture was important. In New York that never happened. It shocked me that even the people who were so visibly helping didn't get any funding for it. We (Arts & Democracy) received almost no funding for what we did. We did get a small grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation and shared \$500 with our partner Staten Island Arts. I was embarrassed it was so little, and they said, "this is the first money we've gotten" for artistic response to the emergency. Dance Theatre, Etcetera, in Brooklyn ended up getting money to replace income: a lot of their arts education stuff got canceled so they got money to help reimburse them for the funding they lost as artists. But it wasn't for their community recovery work which they did tons of.

Local and regional U.S.-based funders in areas hit by natural or civil disaster have sometimes created rapid response funds—relatively small grants with quick turnaround, open to artists and organizations with immediate artistic response projects. For instance, shortly after Michael Brown's death in Ferguson in 2014, more than two dozen projects received quick Social Impact Fund grants ranging from \$750–\$2500 from the **St. Louis Regional Arts Commission**. The regional arts association South Arts raised and distributed \$200,000 to artists and organizations affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In Minnesota, Springboard for the Arts has set up emergency funding for personal and community emergencies: the **Emergency Relief Fund** makes grants of up to \$500 in aid of artists who suffer personally from catastrophes that threaten livelihood and, in partnership with **Emergency Arts**, supports projects proposing to respond creatively to emergencies in their own communities.

Added to the few local arts funders active in artistic response are a number of rapid response funds not dedicated to arts work per se, but with potential to support it. For example, the San Francisco Foundation has launched a **Rapid Response Fund for Movement Building** offering one-time \$3,000–\$15,000 grants. **The Emergent Fund** was established in 2016 to make grants to support organizations based in communities of color facing injustice.

Nationally, **CERF+** (which began in 1985 as the Crafts Emergency Relief Fund and has expanded to focus on "safeguarding artists' livelihoods nationwide") makes grants of up to \$6,000 and loans of up to \$9,000 to artists in emergency situations.

On the CERF+ site, you'll find information about a number of funders who provide emergency support, but again, this is primarily to aid artists directly and not to support artistic response. There's also a listing of funders along with other resources on the **ArtsReady "useful links" page**.

In June 2017, **The Pop Culture Collaborative** (a joint venture of Unbound Philanthropy, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Ford Foundation, The JPB Foundation, and General Service Foundation) opened applications for its Pop-Up grants of \$5,000-\$30,000. "These rapid response grants are available on a rolling basis throughout the year for any individual, organization or company working to harness the power of pop culture to create just, authentic narratives of people of color, Muslims, immigrants and refugees through TV, movies, sports, music and all forms of entertainment and mass media."

The missing piece of the funding landscape is the most essential: substantial, ongoing support for artistic response capability, underwriting artists and organizations who work directly with communities to provide care, comfort, and connection, enliven protest with creativity, and support community reframing and resilience. It takes money to build capacity, support networks, and make a difference. In the U.S. philanthropic context, funding can come from individual contributions, foundations, government agencies, and aligned agencies and organizations (e.g., in this case, emergency management agencies and responder organizations).

Who will support this essential work?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES. The people who shared information for this *Guide* offered many learning resources linked and mentioned in its pages—articles, videos, websites, FEMA training, and more. But in something as collaborative, integral, and rooted as the best community-based arts work, experiential learning is prized above all. Like artistic response, it takes place in relationship and thus yields a wealth of information that cannot be imparted simply by study of relevant writings and other documentation.

It is sad and frightening to say so, but every knowledgeable commentator predicts more weather disasters as climate crisis evolves; and the level of civil disaster shows no signs of lessening, as the gulf between official authority and lived experience widens with each police killing and sniper attack. If challenges to safety and civil order mount, the demand for recovery and resilience will climb even higher. One of the key needs will be to convene artists, other community members, and emergency responders to share experience and learn together, building a network of relationship.

What would it take to make this happen?

"Eric Garner's Eyes" by JR from the 2014 Millions March NYC



PART FOUR: PARTNERSHIPS, ETHICS, VALUES, CARING AND SELF-CARE



**KEEP
CALM
AND
PRACTICE
SELF-CARE**



BE PREPARED: OFFERING EFFECTIVE ARTISTIC RESPONSE

THE BEST ARTISTIC RESPONSE, like other community cultural development work, requires several types of knowledge and skill. Even more so than in ordinary situations, when you are working with people under stress, you'll want to prepare by developing your own skills and knowledge so they are equal to the occasion.

Every emergency grows out of a matrix of larger forces. Whether you are part of the community to which you are offering artistic response or have arrived from elsewhere, your work will have more meaning and impact if you are as fully aware as possible of important aspects of the people and places:

HISTORY. Communities are rooted in their pasts, in generations of heritage. Being herded into temporary shelter in a sports stadium won't be a positive experience for anyone, but specific historic resonances—and potentially, triggers—are there for those whose forebears were enslaved or interned. FEMA trailers in New Orleans were supposed to provide shelter for a matter of months, but five years after Hurricane Katrina, nearly 900 families in Louisiana were still living in them. Nearly half the trailers were found to emit dangerously high levels of formaldehyde. If your community's history includes generations of substandard public housing, that inherited experience adds painful meaning to an already deeply difficult circumstance.

CULTURE. Culture can be seen as the sum-total of the customs, rituals, values, attitudes, and symbols that has evolved over time as each community comes to terms with universal human experiences. How do we understand and mark birth and death, gain and loss, days and places of special meaning, our relationship to the planet, each other, and the forces that sustain them? Every culture has its stories of disaster—enduring, surviving, regrouping, rebuilding—and no two are identical. How people hold their experience of a crisis is shaped both by cultural heritage and present-day practice. There can't be one-size-fits-all effective artistic response.

PUBLIC POLICIES: As earlier *Guide* sections have shown, even events perceived primarily as natural disasters have implications—and often causes—connected to public policy. Years of police militarization have led to events such as the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, the death of Eric Garner in Staten Island, of Sandra Bland in Texas, and so many more. Years of neglect of the Louisiana levees led to the disaster that followed Hurricane Katrina. How have public decisions shaped the context in which a crisis takes place? To approach the experience of those directly affected requires a more complex understanding than calling an earthquake “an act of God” or a cemetery desecration or mosque vandalization the “act of disturbed individuals.” What policies shape response to an earthquake and its aftermath? What policies feed a climate hospitable to acts of violence and desecration?

Effective artistic response requires multiple skills. Few individuals will be equally good at all of these, but artistic response is seldom a solo project, so it makes sense to assemble a team that incorporates them.

COLLABORATIVE ART-MAKING SKILLS are essential, of course: have you developed your ability to make music, tell stories, devise theater, co-create public art, write poetry—in other words, to engage beauty and meaning in whichever art forms are yours to share? The spectrum of participatory art-making runs from artists who see themselves as there entirely to facilitate others' creativity and self-expression to those who understand their own ideas and feelings as the lead element, with others there more to execute than co-create. Most find an in-between path: artists are fully present, contributing members of the group, with specific skills and information to impart, equal to but different from others' skill-sets. But not every talented artist is good at collaborating. That's a skill that has to be cultivated.

FACILITATING GROUP PROCESSES in a sensitive, responsive fashion requires awareness and practice. It's a worthy challenge to balance holding safe and open process with the need to accomplish something concrete. The balance may be quite different for each artistic response process, depending on intentions: immediate response may be almost entirely about working with people to know and express their feelings in a safe space; longer-term work toward resiliency may focus on the co-creation of a mural, play, video, or other artistic product that can be shared. Practice makes is easier to know the right balance for each situation. See the **Artistic Response Public Folder** for a handout on "Holding Space" in groups.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING. Artistic response calls on artists to be community organizers in multiple ways: listening deeply to experiences and perceptions of local conditions and how to address them; interceding with agencies and authorities to support the people you're working with; securing space, materials, and time amidst a situation that may be chaotic; stretching resources, but not to the breaking-point. As Amelia Brown points out in her essay in Part One, functioning as intermediaries between communities and agencies—being an effective translator—requires excellent listening and communication skills. Going beyond that to engage people actively requires even more.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE. Effective artistic response demands self-knowledge. Underpinning it all is a foundational question for the artist: what specific gifts and challenges are you bringing, and how do they affect your work? How well do you function under conditions of high stress and disorder? Do you have the cultural competency to work with people from very different backgrounds and contexts than your own? Have you interrogated your own assumptions enough to spot biases when they arise and to head them off? Have you taken time to understand your own values and ethics, and to explore differences from others' values? See the **Artistic Response Public Folder** for a handout on values and ethics that offers some ways to engage with these questions.

CRAFTING GOOD PARTNERSHIPS

Many sections of this *Guide* relate to the opportunities and challenges of working in partnership. "Part Three: Bridging Worlds: Artists And Agencies" explores ways to bridge between official emergency response and artistic response. The section on ethical commitments immediately following this one spells out decision-making



*Design Studio for Social Intervention
Social Emergency Response Center,
Boston 2016*

and other parameters that will clarify working relationship, helping to avoid the conflict that can follow from not having a clear and detailed agreement. Just a few additional points are necessary to add and underscore here.

CONSIDER THE CONTEXT. When you negotiate a partnership agreement, It's easy to slip into thinking only in terms of direct working relationships: what will each party give and receive, what agreements will shape and protect their specific working relationship? But the larger context also has a say. When the Transforma project partners began their work in New Orleans, Rick Lowe said, "One of the big take-aways from this project is the importance of infrastructure. In the beginning we thought that New Orleans would be a great site for such a nontraditional approach because so much was broken. We thought perhaps the doors would be open for any kind of creative approach to enter into that rebuilding process. But we found out that actually without adequate infrastructure it's extremely difficult to get the support and the kind of focus that you need to make a project happen." Make sure you think about what could go wrong in the larger context and how it might affect your work. Make sure your agreement builds in flexibility to shift course and improvise when needed.

TALK THROUGH RISKS. Partnership agreements are great for focusing intentions and clarifying how each partner sees the work and what each partner gives and gets. The process of arriving at an agreement should put all concerns and considerations on the table, creating an opportunity to explore best- and worst-case scenarios. If any partner harbors a secret fear that others will be irresponsible about resources, claim too much credit for themselves, or be susceptible to pressure to censor challenging artistic expressions, that has to be discussed or the agreement will be flawed going in. Not all risks can be eliminated, but most can be anticipated and ameliorated with planning.

BUILD TRUST. You can look at a partnership agreement as a statement of intentions or as an ironclad accountability pledge. The former views the agreement as part of building trust, anticipating risks and opportunities, setting out as you mean to go on. The latter depends on readiness to take enforcement measures: what if you talk through the terms of partnership and everyone signs on the dotted line, agreeing to the same parameters and conditions—and then one partner simply refuses to keep the agreement? You may have the desire and means to bring in an arbitrator or go to adjudication, but many artists and groups lack both the resources and time to invest in such a process, or may be concerned about the ill will it could generate. Know going in what you are prepared to invest in holding partners to an agreement. If building mutual understanding and trust are to be emphasized more than enforcement, take the time and energy to do that.

SIX ESSENTIAL ETHICAL COMMITMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE ARTISTIC RESPONSE

1. COLLABORATE: YOU'RE A SUPPORTER, NOT A SAVIOR. Far and away the most common ethical principle stressed by people who offered advice for this *Guide* was a challenge people sometimes characterize as the "hero artist syndrome" or the "savior artist complex." Generally, someone who succumbs to this ethical pitfall

has been moved by the plight of those affected by disaster, often by a crisis in a distant community, and has decided to go and help, more or less parachuting into a complex and usually chaotic situation. Carol Bebelles put it this way:

There is a dichotomy in art: the art for life approach and the art for art's sake approach. In one instance the voice of the artist predominates, their view and perspective on life. In the other, the art emerges from the people and the artist winds up being the documenter, the envisioner or the voice. But the content comes from the people.

Based on her work in and around St. Louis, De Nichols expressed it as follows:

Artists have to be humble to understand that we can influence things without always having to be in charge or be the “fixers.” Outcomes work out better when we take those ethical steps to listen to community members and have them be a part of the full process. That is something that I think as community-based and socially-engaged artists we have to be more cognizant about and really push for—especially in communities that are not our own. We cannot just go and say that we’re going to fix all of people’s problems and needs through art because that is a very pompous thing to believe. It takes a lot of collaboration. It takes finding out who are those gatekeepers, who those stakeholders are—from the old grandmothers down to the little kids—who can be a part of the full process. That’s so essential right now.

In a conversation among Transforma Projects participants who produced and assisted a series of artistic response project in New Orleans from 2005 to 2010, Rick Lowe characterized their work as “interested in transforming the way that we think about artists practicing in community-engaged projects. A transformation from the notion of the hero artist to the notion of collaboration.”

That project included artists who typically work in something closer to conventional art-world frames, such as studio art or executing a public art commission where the artist is squarely at the center of the project. So presumably the “we” in that comment refers to them, as the hero artist notion doesn’t carry much currency in thoughtful community arts work. But whether people are new to what Carol Bebelles called the “art for life” approach or have a good deal of experience, attitudinal shifts can make a huge difference in practice. How are you holding the story of what you are doing? If the story doesn’t serve you, you can change it.

For instance, Amelia Brown sees a key question as recognizing local assets and agency even in an emergency:

People understand when someone comes into their community with the mindset, “I’m coming to help you. You need my help. I have all the answers and you don’t know what you’re doing.”

In the case of a disaster, no matter who we are, what language we speak, where we’re located, all of us would like to be received and treated as if we are an asset, our community is an asset, and we have things to offer to rebuild. Whether in a natural or civil disaster, the answers are not within me, but they’re within the community.

2. STEP UP AND STEP BACK: HONOR PEOPLE SETTING THEIR OWN PACE OF ENGAGEMENT AND TELLING THEIR OWN STORIES.

Mike O'Bryan, Program Manager in Youth Arts Education at the **Village of Arts and Humanities** in North Central Philadelphia and Sanctuary Coordinator on a collaborative public health initiative between The U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern PA District and The ANDRUS Sanctuary Institute to bring Trauma Informed Care to the North Philadelphia region, calls for keen sensitivity to people's own desire or reluctance to engage in any particular moment:

Sometimes what we call help is not perceived as help. It can often be perceived as anything but help. So we think we're helping, but the other party might call it annoyance, obstruction, intrusive, abusive, etc. And a lot of that is based on the history of safe relationships that person has or hasn't been exposed to; human beings learn to adapt and cope very early in life and unfortunately for many people that adaptation is based on how they've had to learn to create and maintain safety under threats to their physical, psychological, social or spiritual well-being. We need to be aware of that to really be a good listener and a really great communicator, even beyond words. You should also work to have a diverse set of tools, a toolbox, to help you accomplish the goals of providing support and a restoration of safety when your tactics in the moment are not working or going well and it's creating more tension or problems. Sometimes people are not ready for "the help" we feel or see that they need. They don't want to do that yet; they might not be ready for that step that you think is "right." I think in those moments active listening skills are optimal and questions like "What do you need right now?" Or "Is there anything I can do for you right now?" are helpful. They might literally say that they need a drink of water. Or they might say "I need you to leave me alone."

Okay. I will do that, but that also means that I'm going to come back and follow up because that can change as they begin to come back to a state of calm. I make sure I leave the door open so that they know you can talk to me any time that you're ready. Even if they "objectively need it" by any measure and standard of an assessment tool, I'm going to honor that they have stated they don't or have requested space and time. My job is to be consistent and compassionate with how I show up for them and show up in the space in general. So, I'm often thinking about students (and even adults) in reflection of the following question: How do I invite you, in ways that go beyond language, to participate in building your own process of healing and restoration? Working with tried-and-true tools that people have used to process their stories and to put life together in a way that they feel helps them move forward...how do I invite you to participate in that? Sometimes that's creating open spaces and environments where people feel safe enough to do that at their own time and pace.

So, you know, when I was working in shelters—what some might argue as a nine-month-long crisis experience if you're there living for nine months—I would have structured activity time but then I'd have open time. We'd have Legos; we'd



Participants in the **PhillyEarth** project
at the Village of the Arts
and Humanities

have arts and craft material; we'd have video games; we'd have board games; we'd have music instruments; we'd have radios, iPods. We would let children have free time and participate in what they kind of wanted to at that moment. And I think there's something dramatically healing about that; about the power of choice and the ready access to adults who are consistent and compassionate in their choices and their general disposition.

Sharing first-person stories is one of the core practices of artistic response and one of the most intimate. It plays out in many ways. Sandy Storyline created the container and invitation for people to contribute their own accounts of the storm and its impact in their own words and images. *Cry You One* collected stories and wove them into a devised theater production that also incorporated music and movement. There are examples throughout this *Guide*. Artists have many possible roles in relation to people's stories, but one ethical principle carries through in all these frameworks: that people must speak for themselves. In St. Louis, De Nichols cautions:

For me it's that simple question of is this my story to tell? And if it is, then let's tell it. And if it includes other people's stories and experiences with it, how do we get them or keep them involved in the process? How do we remain transparent about how we're using stories and experiences that have been shared with us? And if it is the case that this is not my story to tell, well, how can I leverage connections and resources to have someone else tell their story if they want to do that? If they don't want to tell their story or have their experience known, in what ways might I be able to use the inspiration that I felt from that while respecting their decision to remain anonymous or private or just not have it be out there?

This comes up especially with a lot of white artists and designers and storytellers: you have to let people own their own stories. We can't tell other people's stories and not give them or allow space for them to have their own agency in telling it. I've seen that so many times here in St. Louis where there are people writing books about what was happening on the ground and they're telling other people's stories. And those people are not benefiting from having their stories stripped away from them and told through someone else's editing and lens and book and stuff. And so that is crucial. And I think part of that is building more platforms for those stories to be shown and shared.

3. YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE: TO WHOM? Like other community-based work, artistic response has multiple accountabilities, and it is sometimes necessary to prioritize.

Consider a hypothetical project funded by a foundation, in partnership with a public agency, centering on a collaboration with community members. A common ethical challenge emerges when the community members share stories or create images or performances that challenge a funder's or agency's public narrative. Perhaps the work includes critical messages or images that aren't deemed "family-friendly," but regardless of specifics, the same question arises: if a partner with more social or economic power demands changes in aspects of the project that directly express people's own experiences or views, how do you resolve the conflict? The funder or agency may have the power to withhold resources or cancel a contract, materially

affecting the project; community members may feel censored at a particularly vulnerable time, made to feel that their authentic expressions of lived reality are unacceptable and should be erased or suppressed. There are many ways to try and reconcile conflicting viewpoints (see the **Artistic Response Public Folder** for a handout on values and ethics that offers some), but if in the end they cannot be resolved in a way that satisfies everyone, an ethical challenge that can be summed up as “moral contract versus legal contract” is engaged.

In a crisis, the primary accountability is to the local community, those most affected by an emergency. Everyone we spoke with emphasized the importance of connecting with local groups rooted in a crisis zone, but not everyone agreed on what that means. For most artistic response veterans, if you are coming from elsewhere, it's key to be invited by locals, either as a first step or as a response to your offer to collaborate. There's a countervailing question at play for some of the people we interviewed: why are you coming here? Is your desire to help people at a distance obscuring the challenges in your own community that also need attention?

It's imperative to know going into an artistic response process where your accountability lies. That self-knowledge will help to safeguard you against entering into relationships you won't be able to sustain honorably, and also give you enhanced awareness of threats to accountability so you can plan in a way that prevents their arising. That knowledge will give you the security of knowing where you will stand if push comes to shove.

4. CLARIFY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. One of the most common challenges in any community cultural development project is tripping over conflicting assumptions about roles, authority, and responsibility. You will be much more likely to avoid such conflicts if these things are negotiated before a project begins. Here are some examples:

DECISION-MAKING: What process and values will shape project decision-making? Some projects are conceived as co-created by everyone involved, using a voting or consensus process to ensure that the form, subject, and approach of an artistic response project reflects group will. Others may have a lead team—elected or appointed—that steers the project, making key decisions after consulting the group. Sometimes a lead artist has set down key project parameters at the outset—say, let's work together to create a story-based play about your experience—and extra sensitivity is required to negotiate an approach that gives participants a say in how their stories or images are used while the artist maintains a lead role.

Not all artistic response projects entail a lot of decision-making: if you're visiting a shelter to entertain and engage people through music, that short-term relationship is unlikely to bring up much formal decision-making; people will simply decide whether or not to take part in what's being offered. But if you have the idea of devising a recording or a musical performance based on iterations of the workshop, you will have decisions to make, and decisions mean stakeholders who generally want their voices to be heard and their choices to count.

AUTHORSHIP: if a work of art is to be produced as part of a project, who will receive credit? Will each person who contributed significantly be named? Many projects



Sandra Khalifa's
Black Futures Month poster

take this approach, but others may specify a lead artist and offer a general credit to “the members of X organization” or “the children of X neighborhood.” If you don’t clarify this going in, potential is great to offend participants who don’t feel their contributions have been properly recognized.

PRESENTATION: If a public performance, art exhibit or installation, or print or media publication is to emerge from a project, who has a say in how and where it is done? Emergencies can heighten fear of exposure or exploitation: community members may worry that their stories will be used for ends they dislike, such as being portrayed as victims before a privileged audience; or being used in a performance that positions an agency that was less than responsive during a crisis as benevolent and effective.

FUNDING: who gets paid and how? Who gets access to space, supplies, and other resources, and how? It may well be that the artists working on a project have secured funding and are offering their skills as part of their professional practice, and therefore their artistic response work contributes to their livelihood. In some projects, resources stretch to offer honoraria or stipends to multiple participants: what is being offered, and what is expected in return? Will the project generate income, as by charging for tickets or selling artworks? If so, how will the proceeds be used?

On the other side of the equation, how is a contract with a funder or sponsor to be structured? What conditions will be placed on funding? Does the funding agreement allow sufficient scope for the types of decision-making and participation the project requires? What forms of access and reporting are required? What policies, rules, or guidelines are being applied to the project? In practice, there’s often some latitude in grant contracts: you may be able to ask for more time if a project requires it or may be fortunate to work with an understanding funder who will support collaborative relationships, feeling secure enough that you don’t need the contract to explicitly permit every element of your project that may diverge from the boilerplate language. But be sure you’re making an informed decision rather than a fingers-crossed leap of faith.

AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS: An agency may be providing access to facilities or connecting you with people affected by an emergency under their purview. All these same questions arise whether your partner is a funder, an emergency response agency, or a community-based organization.

5. ENSURE A RESPECTFUL, RECIPROCAL, CARING ENVIRONMENT. Under emergency conditions, things are often chaotic. There may be little or nothing you can do to affect the big picture, but in the little world of your project, ethics require all that’s possible to ensure participants a supportive environment. For example, you may be working with members of different cultural communities who hold ideas about each other that don’t make for congenial and respectful working relationships; that will call on you to help negotiate language and promote reciprocal understanding in the place of stereotyping. Or you may experience moments when the boys working on a project are less than respectful to the girls, with teasing eliding into harassment, playfulness eliding into unwanted touching or offensive language.

And when participants are sharing traumatic or otherwise intimate experiences, it will be incumbent on you to set boundaries that hold confidentiality.

Many artists set groundrules for community-based projects, offering basic working agreements they've learned from experience, then inviting participants to add parameters needed for their own comfort and well-being in that specific situation. See the **Artistic Response Public Folder** for sample working agreements you can adapt.

6. BE MINDFUL OF YOUR OWN IMPACT. When a crisis draws visiting artists from outside the affected communities, they can leave a large footprint that outlasts the emergency. Fifteen months after Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans' population had dropped by more than half. Today, the population is at 90% of pre-Katrina level. By no means all of the increase is returning residents. Many of those who've arrived since 2005 are newcomers. Carol Bebel describes it as a complicated story:

The track of the story is: I impacted my life, I left the life of comfort and ease and I came to New Orleans to make a difference there and I really loved it and I continue to make a contribution and I continue to do the stuff, etc. And that is the story for them. The other story is: I had a job once but the job is gone because there were so many people who have come in and taken the jobs. I had a house once, but I can't afford it now because who come from very high expensive places are willing to pay more than I can pay and so the landlord has changed it. It's the same story but a different side of it. It's one of those instances of a conundrum.

In our instance, everybody was gone and trying to get their life together. That was the thing about being replaced. People came to help us and fell in love with this place and replaced people. Some of it was natural. The city empties out; there is no one here. Okay. Our people have to come back as they can, but the city has to start working. So it starts working with people whose lives are in order, who are willing to come and do this work or are willing to come and volunteer. Those folks come and start helping to get things together. They start coming and they discover something: in our broke-down, distressed dysfunctional post-disaster selves folks saw a light in us and this city that made them decide to unpack their lives from worlds that were running perfectly well to come and be here. They thought, "I like this, I could come to this for three or five years, seven or eight years, ten years." So part of it is human nature. And then what kicks in is who we are as humans in America where we don't have compassion and empathy working as strongly as it could. It's an ignorance, it's not a depravity. It's a ignorance of what it means to essentially thrive at someone else's expense.

Some people might look at New Orleans and see one side of this story as the foreground, some the other. There may not be a single right answer, but proceeding in ignorance of one's impact is clearly the wrong answer.

There's a short-term physical impact too. Kate Dinneen, who works with Community Emergency Response Teams, described it:

If you are going to go and respond to a disaster, you don't want to put a burden on the people who are going through the disaster and who are responding. So

that means you take everything that you're going to need. You don't expect to have a hotel room there. You don't expect to have food and water there, you bring your own. That's if you're responding right away. If things have settled down a month or two months past the initial event then you might be able to expect to have a hotel room and things like that. But you need to go in completely self-sufficient.

CARING AND SELF-CARE

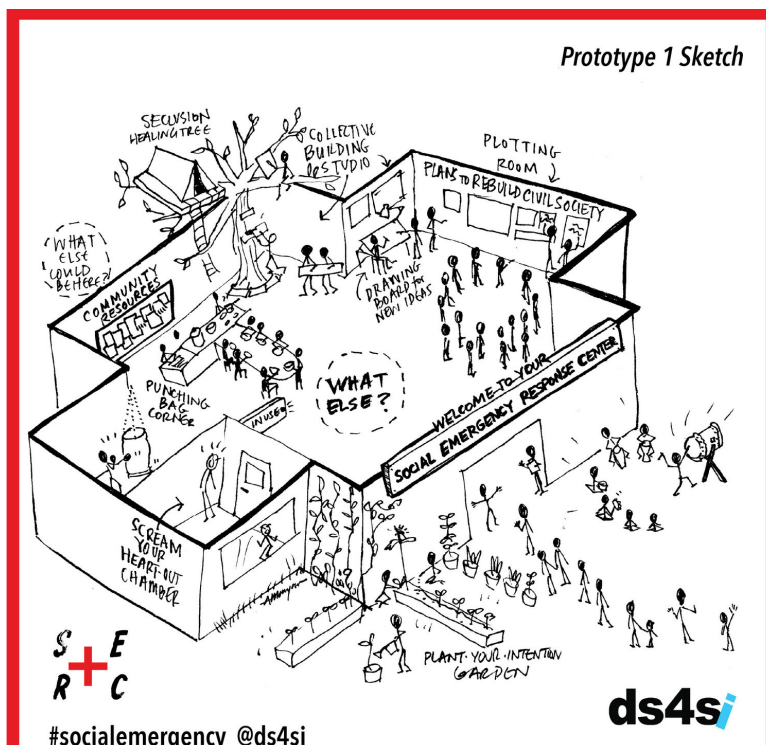
To some degree, every effective artistic response project extends caring to people who are suffering from an immediate disaster or its longer-term consequences. Mike O'Bryan described a framework he uses to focus on multiple dimensions of care:

Safety on multiple levels has been accosted. In the sanctuary model, we talk about the four dimensions of safety. One is physical; then psychological. The third is social, and the fourth is moral. If any one of those is accosted you end up with situations that can be very tense and that might be viewed as negative.

It's important whenever we go into a crisis to remember that often more than one—and sometimes all four—of those dimensions of safety have been transgressed. You are coming into that situation sometimes as an outsider, not indigenously a part of that community, not indoctrinated to the local culture and custom. And that in itself can sometimes threaten or further threaten these dimensions of safety that have already been accosted. So it's important to think about your role in that space and that empathic listening, empathic inquiry, the openness to be teachable and understanding that even in crisis sometimes people do know exactly what they need. And it's trying to make sure we hear that and to answer that.

Some of the most needed and supportive artistic response projects are not arts projects *per se*. Rather, they address these multiple dimensions of personal well-being, providing opportunities for respite and reconnection to self and others, combining arts offerings with other types of comfort and engagement to create an environment that nurtures resilience and possibility.

For example, the **Design Studio for Social Intervention** has been experimenting with SERCs (Social Emergency Response Centers), as noted in the beginning of this Guide. You can see **images and video describing the prototype center DS4SI piloted** in 2016 in Dorchester, the largest and most diverse neighborhood of Boston. Their website says “Our goal is for communities to be able to self-organize SERCs whenever they feel like they need them. We imagine a people-led public



infrastructure sweeping the country!” They encourage people to pop up SERC’s in all kinds of venues: “youth programs, art galleries, health centers, colleges, community organizing programs, etc.”

An excellent free SERC manual can be downloaded from the [DS4SI site](#). In addition to detailed advice and information on welcoming, providing shelter, food, information, healing opportunities (including offerings that speak to cultural as well as physical well-being), and space to connect and collaborate, the manual contains information on emailing DS4SI to obtain a SERC kit with signs and other ancillary materials.

For about a year following Hurricane Katrina, Ashé Cultural Arts Center in New Orleans—which was not damaged by flooding—offered the community “Chill Zones” every Friday. Carol Bebelles describes them:

We gave people nice food to eat and music and poetry. In time we had a massage therapist who was there and folks who did acupuncture, so that people could just attend to themselves and feel alright about doing it. One of the other things a disaster does is make you aware of the need for so much to do and it therefore makes you a little bit wary about using any time for anything else. But this was helping people to validate the necessity of them going on. This is truly the moment you are putting the oxygen mask on yourself so that you can be of use to others. It wasn't like a sermon or a wise suggestion. We were saying it and doing it.

You really cannot get somebody's attention if they are hungry, if they're out of doors. If they don't have the things that they need to be able to take care of their lives. So it is really critical to get those things taken care of. But you really can't jump from there to the forms and the money and the blah-blah-blah and totally bypass the notion of getting peoples' life energy back up and their life spirit going again. You've have got to be able to find a way to manage to do that. And some of that is about being able to connect them to the sorrow that they feel so that they express it. So being able to have the poetry and the music and we had, our poets did such fabulous renditions of work that told the story of what the loss felt like. And what it felt like being powerless. And what it felt like to have other people coming in and taking care of you and then taking your place in your own city.

People were still coming home for a long time. So it became a gathering-place for new people who came to a city which didn't have a lot of places to gather in. They could come here and discover people who they wouldn't have to go looking for. Connectivity.

Self-care for artistic responders is critical if the work they do is to be sustainable. In his interview for this *Guide*, Mike O'Bryan talked about emotional awareness of self and others as a key competency:

Paying attention to the emotional information that's being displayed and responding appropriately to it. Not allowing yourself to become victim of emotional contagia, so that you can do the job of helping to facilitate and work with this person as they are creating their own healing. And it's a duo process.

I think people heal in groups, or heal best in groups, and with other people. Human relationships have the power to restore and rectify so much in life. And so whatever helps keep human relationships healthy and strengthens it, especially in these crisis moments, those are the skills and tools that are most important. Being able to relinquish the need to be right even when you are objectively right. Is that bringing you closer together to help facilitate healing or is it actually dividing you two and you get a badge of rightness that you can't use or do anything with? What's most important?

Begin with the end result of someone healing in mind, and using that as an anchor for when things get rough and tough and being able to step back and kind of de-personalize some of the tense moments that people are going through. Hurt people are hurt. It's hard to remember that sometimes when you are sacrificing and you're a hurt person who's trying to facilitate healing as well. So hurt people might do things that hurt. And that's okay. It took me a long time to learn that.

Just as expressing sadness, fear, and pain are necessary, O'Bryan pointed out even in a time marked by grief and loss, joy exists:

What also helps people process trauma is to help people process the joy in life. You've got to help people process the successes in their lives. Sometimes I feel that when we want to get into the trauma work, it becomes an obsession. This is no judgment against anybody, it's really a reflection of myself. It can become an obsession. But we're not that binary, right? We're not either all thriving or all rotting at the same time. It's actually this beautiful, weird amalgamation of both. And what tends to become magnified is that which we magnify, that which we give more light and space to.

And so it is very important, particularly as artists, that we use our skills to help people grow the space for joy, to honor the joyful things and the little things. But sometimes they're not little at all; they're big things. What's little to one person might be huge to another person.

That's why you've got to make the space to honor it all, the big stuff, the little stuff, because you just never know in that person's narrative, in that person's life context, and even in the midst of some crisis experience that might be lasting for multiple days, you just never know when the joy might help literally save their mind.



IN CONCLUSION

This *Guide* was created in an early stage of the developing field of artistic response. Most of the projects described were initiated by artists, working with very little infrastructure and often, without much support from funders and agencies whose purview includes communities under stress. We are eager to learn more about the important work being done to improve, expand, and support artistic response and to bridge the currently wide gap between artists and agencies. Please contact us at hello@usdac.us to share information or start a conversation that can help artistic response succeed.

This *Guide* must conclude with gratitude: to all the artists who have placed themselves on the side of help and healing, freely offering their gifts to individuals, families, and communities under extreme stress; to the ancestors whose remarkable resilience is an inheritance of communities across the U.S. and beyond, and whose creativity endows possibility today; and to all those who have taken the risk of enlisting the healing power of arts and culture and whose stories guide us now.

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INTERVIEWEES

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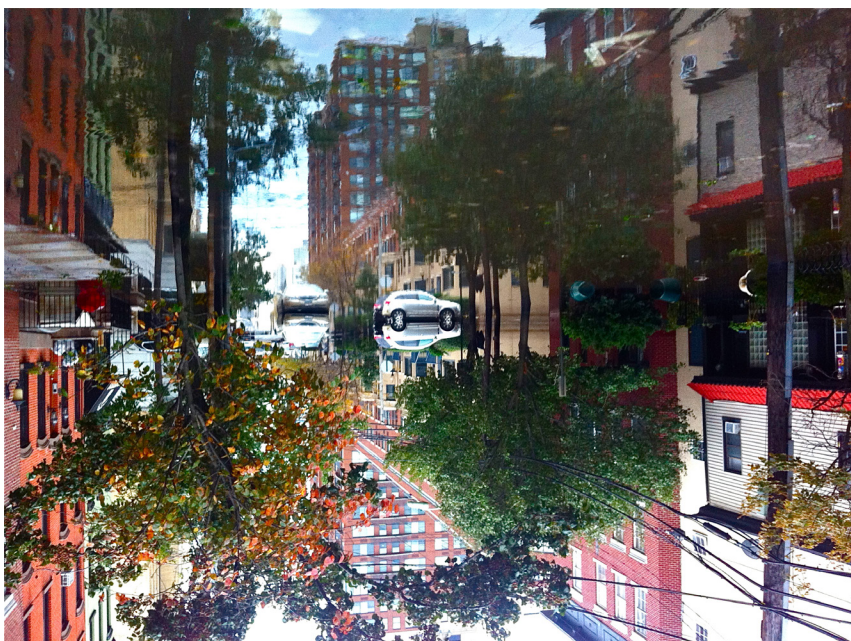
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TRANSCRIBERS: Davis Bynum, Ed Carroll, Remington Dayn-Ryan, Vince Hancock, Bonnie Stinson

"The Beautiful Thing in Life" by Eliane
Sussman on **Sandy Storyline**.



LINKS

FRONT MATTER

- Cannupa Hanska Luger: <http://www.cannupahanska.com/mniwiconi/>
- U.S. Department of Arts and Culture: <http://usdac.us>
- Emergency Arts: <http://www.emergencyartsnetwork.com/>

PART ONE: ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

MAKING THE MOST OF ART BECAME THE OXYGEN

- Ashé Cultural Arts Center: <http://www.ashecac.org/main/>
- *Civic Engagement in the Wake of Katrina*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/nps.6869078.0001.001>
- Sandy Storyline: <https://www.sandystoryline.com/stories/after-sandy/>
- Design Studio for Social Intervention: <http://www.ds4si.org/>
- Dr. Mindy Fullilove on “The Mashed Up Americans”: <http://www.mashupamericans.com/listen/podcast-ep-34-preparing-fight-dr-mindy-fullilove/>
- *The Upcycle: Beyond Sustainability—Designing for Abundance*: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/16066814-the-upcycle>
- American Friends Service Committee, Seattle: <https://www.afsc.org/office/seattle-wa>
- Transforma: <http://www.transformaprojects.org/>

SIX PRINCIPLES FOR ARTS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Emergency Arts: <http://www.emergencyartsnetwork.com/>
- International Award for Public Art, Cities of Climate Change Conference in New Zealand: <http://forecastpublicart.org/public-art-review/current-projects/2015/07/iapa-award-winner/>
- 100 Resilient Cities framework: http://www.100resilientcities.org/#/_Yz5jjmg%2FMSd1PWI%3D/
- Damon Davis, “All Hands On Deck”: <http://heartacheandpaint.com/AllHandsOnDeck>
- The Amplifier Foundation download: <https://amplifier.org/#download>

PART TWO: CRAFTING ARTISTIC RESPONSE

WHAT CAN ART DO?

- Summer 2013 *GIA Reader*: <http://www.giarts.org/article/creative-recovery-and-cultural-resiliency>
- Arts & Democracy: <http://artsanddemocracy.org/>
- The Mirror Casket: <http://mirrorcasket.com/>
- *An Act of Collective Imagination*: <http://usdac.us/report-on-first-two-years>
- St. Louis Regional Arts Commission: <https://racstl.org/>
- Artists Against Police Violence: <http://artistsagainstopoliceviolence.tumblr.com/>
- The Ferguson Moment: <http://www.thefergusonmoment.com/>
- Damon Davis: <https://news.artnet.com/exhibitions/days-before-the-verdict-artist-reclaimed-fergusons-boarded-up-shops-181314>
- Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego: <http://www.mcasd.org/exhibitions/damon-davis-all-hands-deck>
- “Belonging As A Cultural Right” in *Othering & Belonging*: <http://www.otheringandbelonging.org/belonging-cultural-right/>
- #Icantkeepquiet: <https://www.icantkeepquiet.org/thesong/>
- #WRITERSRESIST: <http://www.writersresist.org/>
- *Cry You One*: <http://www.cryyouone.com/>

- Nicole Gurgel on Alternate ROOTS: <https://alternateroots.org/decolonizing-aesthetics/>
- Kelly Hayes and Desiree Kane on Standing Rock: <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/37475-whatever-it-takes-another-day-on-the-front-lines-of-nodapl>

A RANGE OF ARTISTIC RESPONSE

- USDAC HI-LI Database: <http://usdac.us/hili>
- USDAC Super Pac: <http://usdac.us/superpac>
- USDAC #DareToImagine Toolkit: <http://usdac.us/dare-to-imagine>
- USDAC #RevolutionOfValues Toolkit: <http://usdac.us/revolution>

STORY GATHERING

- Sandy Storyline: <https://www.sandystoryline.com/> and <https://www.sandystoryline.com/us/>
- Springboard interview with Amelia Brown: <http://springboardexchange.org/recoveringthestory/>
- Sandy Storyline story by Ilyana Kadushin: <https://www.sandystoryline.com/stories/joy-of-life/>
- Humanity After The Storm by Caron Atlas: <http://artsanddemocracy.org/detail-page/?program=blog&capID=147>
- Project Jukebox: <http://jukebox.uaf.edu/site7/exxonvaldez>
- Living with Disaster: <https://www.emschools.org.au/digital-stories>
- Stories at Australian Centre for the Moving Image: <http://generator.acmi.net.au/education-themes/community/communities-under-threat/knot>
- People's State of the Union: <http://usdac.us/psotu>

PUBLIC ART

- *Called to Walls*: <https://www.calledtowalls.com/>
- Dave Loewenstein's blog: <https://midamericamuralproject.blogspot.com/2011/07/arriving-in-joplin.html>
- John T. Williams Memorial Totem Pole: <https://youtu.be/FnzoZB2E3bQ>
- Evacuateer: <http://www.evacuateer.org/>
- Transforma: <http://www.transformaprojects.org/>
- Mirror Shield Project: <http://www.cannupahanska.com/mniwiconi/>
- Genocide Memorial Park: <http://barefootartists.org/the-rwanda-healing-project/genocide-memorial-park/>
- Gran Fury NY Public Library: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/gran-fury-collection#/?tab=navigation>
- Gran Fury Hyperallergic: <https://hyperallergic.com/42085/aids-art-activism-gran-fury/>

POETRY AND NARRATIVE

- The Off/Page Project: <http://youthspeaks.org/offpage/about/>
- Broken City Poets: <https://youtu.be/jUiS-9HJq6I>
- Off/Page poems on PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/poetry-exposes-truth-about-housing-in-the-bay-area/>
- Poets Reading The News: <http://www.poetsreadingthenews.com/2016/12/upon-an-oakland-fire/>
- Ghost Ship Fire Poems: <http://www.poetsreadingthenews.com/?s=ghost+ship+fire>
- Together We Are New York: <http://kundiman.org/together-we-are-ny>
- Kavad: <http://kundiman.org/kavad>

MUSIC

- *Firerock: Pass The Spark*: <http://www.firerockmusical.com/>
- Artists and Climate Change: <https://artistsandclimatechange.com/2017/04/06/firerock-pass-the-spark/>
- Hurricane Katrina songs on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_charity_songs_for_Hurricane_Katrina_relief

- “I Can’t Breathe” and “This Ends Today” by the Garner family: <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/eric-garners-family-drops-moving-new-song-i-cant-breathe-20160711> and <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jan/09/eric-garner-family-tribute-song-this-ends-today>
- “I Hear A Voice” <https://soundcloud.com/twincitiesmobilejazzproject/i-hear-a-voice> by the Twin Cities Mobil Jazz Project: <http://www.twincitiesmobilejazzproject.org/>

DANCE

- Dancing for Justice: <https://dancingforjusticeworldwide.tumblr.com/>
- “When Dance Has A Voice:” <http://thinkingdance.net/articles/2014/12/20/3/When-Dance-Has-a-Voice/>
- Dancing for Justice Video: <https://youtu.be/fUbnpXuP2LM>
- Dance Theatre Etcetera: <https://dtetc.org/>
- “Angels and Accordions:” <https://dtetc.org/angels-and-accordions/>
- “Creative Recovery and Cultural Resiliency:” <http://www.giarts.org/article/creative-recovery-and-cultural-resiliency>

THEATER

- The Bloomsburg Theater Ensemble: <http://www.bte.org/>
- *Facing Our Truth: Ten-Minute Plays on Trayvon, Race and Privilege*: <http://www.thenewblackfest.org/facingourtruth>
- *HANDS UP: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testaments*: <http://www.thenewblackfest.org/handsup>
- Howlround: <http://howlround.com/hands-up-testaments-from-the-policed>
- *Every 28 Hours: An Investigation of The Events In Ferguson Missouri, and Black Lives In America*: <http://www.every28hoursplays.org/>
- The Ferguson Moment blog: <http://www.thefergusonmoment.com/p/every-28-hours.html>

MEDIA AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- Ferguson Voices: Disrupting The Frame: <https://www.udayton.edu/blogs/artssciences/17-01-13-ferguson-voices.php>
- The Moral Courage Project: <http://proof.org/moral-courage-project>
- Jimmie Briggs interview: <http://www.daytoncitypaper.com/disrupting-the-frame-35-ferguson-voices-break-from-the-national-narrative-at-ud/>
- Documenting Ferguson: <http://digital.wustl.edu/ferguson/>
- Alive in Truth: <http://www.aliveintruth.com/>
- The Lower Ninth Ward Living Museum: <http://l9livingmuseum.org/>
- The Bdot Memory Map: <http://bdotememorymap.org/>

INDIVIDUAL ART-MAKING

- Come Together: Surviving Sandy: <http://cometogethersandy.com/>
- *Oh Sandy: A Remembrance* recorded poems: <http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Sandy.php>
- Viral: 25 Years from Rodney King: <http://artresponders.org/about-1/>
- Eric Garner’s Eyes: <http://www.complex.com/style/2014/12/jr-image-of-eric-garners-eyes-leads-millions-march-nyc-protest> by JR: <http://www.jr-art.net/>
- Black Futures Month posters: <http://art.blacklivesmatter.com/blackfuturesmonth/>
- “We Are The Storm” climate change portfolio: <http://www.culturestrike.org/project/we-are-storm-climate-change-portfolio>; Favianna Rodriguez poster image: <http://www.wearethestorm.org/faviana-rodriguez.html>
- When She Rises at CAAM: <http://caamedia.org/blog/2016/04/11/when-she-rises-asian-american-women-artists-on-resistance-and-resilience/>

PART THREE: BRIDGING WORLDS, ARTISTS AND AGENCIES

- “Katrina Wreckage and Tears . . . And Still We Rise by Viola Burley Leak: <http://www.cincymuseum.org/traveling-exhibits/and-still-we-rise>

- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT): <https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>
- Up Against The Law Legal Collective: <http://upagainstthelaw.org/>
- Organizing for Power, Organizing for Change website: <http://organizingforpower.org/action-resource/>

OFFICIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): <https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>
- Incident Command System resources: <https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/index.htm>
- ICS training resources: <https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials.htm#item1>
- Course catalog for first responders: <https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/frt/npccatalog>
- National Response Framework at FEMA: <https://www.fema.gov/national-response-framework>
- Full 2016 National Response Framework: https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1466014682982-9bcf8245ba4c6Oc120aa915abe74e15d/National_Response_Framework3rd.pdf
- National Response Framework three-page summary: https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1466014891281-6e7f6Oceaf0be5a937ab2ed0eae0672d/InformationSheet_Response_Framework.pdf
- “Issues, Principles and Attitudes – Oh My! Examining Perceptions from Select Academics, Practitioners And Consultants on the Subject of Emergency Management:” <https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/emprinciples.aspx>
- Bella Ciao: http://bellaciao.org/en/article.php3?id_article=8066
- Aaron Broussard on “Meet The Press:” http://bellaciao.org/en/article.php3?id_article=8066#fema

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RELIEF FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

- Come Together: Surviving Sandy: <http://cometogethersandy.com>
- Grantmakers in the Arts arts preparedness links: <http://www.giarts.org/group/arts-funding/emergency-readiness-response-and-recovery>
- National Coalition for Arts’ Preparedness and Emergency Response 2014–2020 plan: http://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/building-resiliency-arts-sector_executive-summary.pdf
- Online resources at CERF+: <https://cerfplus.org/>
- Essential Guidelines for Arts Responders Organizing in the Aftermath of Disaster:” http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Essential_Guidelines_for_Arts_Responders_O.pdf
- “Readiness and Resiliency: Advancing A Collaborative and National Strategy for the Arts in Times of Emergencies:” <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/nea-readiness-and-resilience-convening-report.pdf>
- Regional arts associations: <http://usregionalarts.org/>
- ArtsReady: <https://www.artsready.org/>
- Performing Arts Readiness Project: <http://performingartsreadiness.org/>

MAKING THE CASE: CAN YOU PROVE THAT?

- Animating Democracy impact assessment resources: <http://animatingdemocracy.org/home-impact>
- Animating Democracy Aesthetic Perspectives Framework: <http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Aesthetic%20Perspectives%20Full%20Framework.pdf>
- June 2013 *Public Art Review*: <http://forecastpublicart.org/issues/issue-48/>
- 2010 compendium of art therapy research: <https://arttherapy.org/upload/outcomes.pdf>
- 2007 research review, *Arts in Psychotherapy*: <https://www.rafaelstichting.nl/queeste/files/2012/11/review-effectiveness-of-art-therapy-on-traumatized-children.pdf>
- “Post-Disaster Group Art Therapy Treatment for Children:” <http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1129&context=etd>
- Arts Queensland’s Creative Recovery Pilot project: <http://nsfconsulting.com.au/project/evaluation-of-creative-recovery-pilot-project/>

- Creative Recovery on PlaceStories: <http://placestories.com/community/creativerecovery>
- Australian artistic response projects: <http://nsfconsulting.com.au/arts-disaster-recovery/>
- *Gauging the Impacts of Post-Disaster Arts and Culture Initiatives in Christchurch: A Literature Review*: <http://www.mch.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Christchurch Literature Review Summary of Findings 2016 %28D-0660926%29.PDF>
- “Creative resilience in Wood Buffalo: How the arts and culture can be a major contributor to local recovery and rebuilding:” http://www.artscouncilwb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Creative_resilience_Wood_Buffalo.pdf
- National Performance Network: <https://nnpweb.org>
- St. Louis Regional Arts Commission: <https://racstl.org/>
- Emergency Relief Fund: <https://springboardforthearts.org/additional-resources/emergency-relief-fund/>
- Rapid Response Fund for Movement Building: <http://sff.org/programs/nurturing-equity-movements/rapid-response-fund-for-movement-building/>
- The Emergent Fund: <https://www.emergentfund.net/>
- CERF+ grants: <https://cerfplus.org/craft-emergency-relief-fund/eligibility-guidelines/>
- ArtsReady useful links: https://www.artsready.org/page/useful_links
- The Pop Culture Collaborative: <http://popcollab.org/>

PART FOUR: PARTNERSHIPS, ETHICS, VALUES, CARING AND SELF-CARE

- Artistic Response Public Folder: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/OB8TOgFOLhVwxbUxMOHRFUmXLTOU>
- Village of Arts and Humanities: <https://villagearts.org/>
- PhillyEarth project: <https://villagearts.org/programs/philly-earth/>
- Sandra Khalifa’s Black Futures Month poster: <http://art.blacklivesmatter.com/blackfuturesmonth/>
- Design Studio for Social Intervention: <http://www.ds4si.org/>
- Social Emergency Response Center prototype: <http://www.ds4si.org/interventions/serc>
- DS4I SERC manual: <http://www.ds4si.org/s/DS4SI-SERC-Manual.pdf>
- “The Beautiful Thing in Life” by Eliane Sussman on Sandy Storyline: <https://www.sandystoryline.com/stories/the-beautiful-thing-in-life/>

GLOSSARY

ARTISTIC RESPONSE describes arts-based work responding to disaster or other community-wide emergency, much but not all created in collaboration with community members directly affected. Most artistic response pursues one or more of three main objectives: offering comfort, care, or connection in the immediate wake of a crisis; creating powerful images and experiences that amplify and focus protest, penetrating the media and public awareness; and engaging those affected by a crisis in creative practices over time that help them reframe and integrate their experience, building resilience and strengthening social fabric.

CITIZEN ARTIST describes anyone who enlists in the USDAC, endorsing the Statement of Values. Citizen Artists work in many arenas, media, and locations. It isn't required to be a professional artist nor to be a U.S. citizen to be a Citizen Artist.

COMMUNITY describes a unit of social organization based on some distinguishing characteristic or affinity: proximity ("the St. Louis community"), belief ("the Jewish community"), ethnicity ("the Latino community"), profession ("the medical community"), or orientation ("the gay community"). The word's meaning becomes more concrete closer to the ground: "the gay, Jewish, academic community of St. Louis" probably describes a group of people who have a passing chance of being acquainted, whereas many of the more general formulations are ideological assertions.

COMMUNITY ARTS/ARTIST is the common term for community cultural development. There are many variations (e.g., some say "community-based"). "Community arts" expresses something about the people in a specific place and time and springs from the imaginations and creativity of those people.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT describes a range of initiatives undertaken by artist-organizers in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media, building cultural capacity and contributing to social change. Sometimes abbreviated CCD.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT can be used in institutional settings to describe internships, field placements, and university-community projects. In community organizing settings, the term is enlarged to specify inviting and encouraging meaningful participation in a project.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING describes the process of bringing people together to act on their common interests. This term is used to describe activities that seek social and environmental justice and cultural democracy. Community organizing aims to create social movements, helping to build a base of common concerns and aspirations and to mobilize community members to act in concert.

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING refers to a multi-faceted, arts-based design and planning process for creating interesting, useful, transformative, vibrant spaces with the people who live in a neighborhood. Many cultural democracy advocates prefer CREATIVE PLACEKEEPING, to contrast this activity with processes that feed displacement and gentrification.

CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP describes a condition in which every person feels at home in his or her own community, in which all contributions to history and culture are acknowledged and reflected in the cultural landscape, in which full inclusion is a lived reality granted to all regardless of identity, legal status, or other characteristics.

CULTURAL DEMOCRACY describes a philosophy or policy emphasizing pluralism, participation, and equity within and between cultures, in contrast with those that privilege one cultural heritage or framework over others. Although it has roots in anti-Ku Klux Klan writings of the 1920s, it did not come into common usage until introduced as a policy rubric in Europe in the 1960s.

CULTURAL EQUITY describes the goal of a movement originated by artists and organizers from communities of color and their allies, dedicated to ensuring a fair share of resources for institutions focusing on non-European cultures. The goal of cultural equity organizing is to redress and correct historic imbalances in favor of European derived culture.

CULTURAL POLICY describes the aggregate of values and principles guiding any social entity in cultural affairs. Cultural policies are most often made by governments, from school boards to legislatures, but also by many other institutions in the private sector, from corporations to community organizations. Policies provide guideposts for those making decisions and taking actions that affect cultural life.

CULTURAL RIGHTS: The right to practice one's culture is a fundamental human right enshrined in the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Cultural rights enable freedoms such as expression, association, speech, and worship.

CULTURE in its broadest, anthropological sense includes all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages).

CULTURE SHIFT describes a paradigm shift, as for example from a consumer culture to a creator culture, from a policy based on privilege to a cultural democracy.

DEVELOPMENT (with its many subsets such as "economic development," "community development" and "cultural development") describes a process of analyzing the resources and needs of a particular community or social sector, then planning and implementing a program of interlocking initiatives to rectify deficiencies and build on strengths. The community cultural development field stresses participatory, self-directed development strategies, where members of a community define their own aims and determine their own paths to reach them, rather than imposed development, which tends to view communities as problems to be solved by bringing circumstances in line with predetermined norms.

FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is the chief U.S. federal agency in charge of emergency management and training. FEMA provides **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** information and connects people to training opportunities across the country, saying it "educates individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations."

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS): From FEMA, “the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

SOCIAL EMERGENCY describes the pervasive and unevenly distributed condition of communities under pressure from forces such as state-sanctioned violence, displacement, water pollution and other environmental hazards imposed by those who hold power on those they see as powerless.

SOCIAL FABRIC (also cultural fabric) describes the aggregate of embedded history, customs, modes of gathering and communication, relationships, and institutions that sustain and enliven community life.

SOCIAL IMAGINATION describes the capacity to envisage alternatives to existing social arrangements, institutions, and policies. Social imagination asserts each person’s right to a voice in society, helping to shape the future.

SOCIAL JUSTICE describes a condition in which equity, inclusion, fairness, and integrity shape social reality. When social justice prevails, entrenched privilege is replaced by full, participatory democracy and full human rights are guaranteed to all.

SOCIAL PRACTICE art focuses on the interaction between audience, social systems, and the artist. It often borrows from community arts or community cultural development approaches, but in general, it is validated by conventional artworld standards (e.g., critical reviews, museum shows, patronage) rather than validated by community members.

STORY CIRCLE describes a small group of individuals sitting in a circle, sharing stories—usually from their own experience or imagination—focusing on a common theme. As each person in turn shares a story, a richer and more complex story emerges. By the end, people see both real differences and things their stories have in common. A story circle is a journey into its theme, with multiple dimensions, twists, and turns. Story circles are often understood as deriving from indigenous traditions. There are many variations. Theater makers such as Roadside Theater and John O’Neal have been central in developing the practice for use in creating original performance and community telling and listening projects.

TEACHING ARTIST is a term for artists working in schools and other learning settings. They are not art teachers per se, but working artists who bring their skills and perspectives into classrooms, after-school programs, social service agencies and sometimes other institutions such as hospitals and prisons. Some teaching artists think of themselves as community artists, applying community cultural development values and methods to their work, but this is not universal.